

March 31, 2018

To: Nominating Committee at Mental Health America

From: Teri Ooms, Executive Director – The Institute

Re: Linda Thomas-Hemak, MD

Dr. Thomas has advanced mental health as a part of primary care in several unique ways. First, the graduate medical education program at The Wright Center (TWC) incorporates behavioral health training not only in its education, but also in its practice environment. TWC has a number of community based health clinics that supplement a resident's hospital rotations. A behavioral health assessment is incorporated into primary care visits. TWC also houses a behavioral health coordinator and a substance abuse counselor. TWC has developed relationships with mental health and substance abuse providers and social service agencies in an effort to provide a full realm of services to the patient.

Behavioral health providers play a vital part in delivering patient-centered, team-based care to individuals and populations. Responsive to the shortage of psychiatrists in America, The Wright Center has developed and introduced its ACGME-accredited, four-year, community-based Psychiatry Residency program, welcoming its first class of residents in July 2017.

Further, Dr. Thomas created The Wright Center's Psychiatry Residency is unique in its integration of behavioral health services within primary care environments and promotion of preventive screening, timely interventions and a team-based approach to care, especially for those patients who may not initially seek help on their own. Residents will train at community-based clinics like The Wright Center for Primary Care Mid Valley and Geisinger Community Medical Center, a community-based hospital, as well as within regional public health-based settings, specialty practices, behavioral health clinics and safety-net health centers.

Block Schedules:

PGY-1	PGY-2	PGY-3	PGY-4
1 block Internal Medicine	4 blocks Consult Liaison		3 blocks Elective Service Chief
	6 blocks Inpatient Psychiatry	13 blocks Outpatient Psychiatry	
2 blocks Neurology			7 blocks Elective

7 blocks Inpatient Psychiatry	2 blocks Child Adolescent Psychiatry	1 block Geriatric Psychiatry
3 blocks Inpatient Medicine	1 block Addiction Psychiatry	1 block Crisis Response Unit
		1 block Forensic Psychiatry

Dr. Thomas also secured funding for the TWC to develop an opioid program. TWC is one of 45 Opioid Use disorder centers of excellence in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania – one of four in Northeastern PA. The initiative is championed by Governor Tom Wolf and supported by the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services. Unlike a traditional rehab facility, Centers of Excellence help those in recovery reshape their lifestyle from the comfort of their own community. When individuals visit our Center of Excellence, they will connect with addiction and recovery specialists, social workers and medical providers. The team provides and actively coordinates vital medical, social, behavioral and lifestyle services to help break the cycle of addiction.

TWC organization's School Based Health Center (SBHC) partnership with the Scranton School District aims to improve the health, wellness and academic performance of students by removing their barriers to learning. SBHC provides easy access to immediate, quality healthcare in a safe and convenient setting. The program has been so successful in less than a year that it is serving residents in the area of the school and in less than a year is self-sustaining.

Dr. Thomas has succeed in fully integrating mental health into primary care in the regions that it serves. Further, given that TWC is a community based residency program, its residents, our next generation of doctors, are learning how to successful integrate mental health into primary care.

Biographical Sketch

Linda Thomas-Hemak, MD, President and CEO of The Wright Center for Graduate Medical Education and The Wright Center Medical Group, graduated as a Michael DeBakey Scholar from Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, Texas and completed Harvard's Medicine/Pediatrics Residency in Boston, MA. She joined The Wright Center in 2000 and became President and CEO in 2012. She has been the Program Director for the well accredited Internal Medicine Residency Program since 2007 and has overseen its successful learning venues at Regional and Moses Taylor hospitals and Wright Centers for Primary Care, as well as its significant expansion with thriving new learning environments at Geisinger Community Medical Center, the Wilkes Barre Veterans Affairs Hospital and within a regional network of Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). As Program Director, she has successfully led integration of the ACGME, Patient Centered Medical Home and EMR Meaningful Use Competencies into a curriculum matrix and Milestones Based Assessment to meet the standards of the ACGME's Next Accreditation System. She has lead the notable regional and national expansion of The Wright Center's community based Teaching Health Center Graduate Medical Education Consortium which aims to address America's physician shortage, mal-distribution in rural communities, and related health disparities. She has also served as a Primary Healthcare Specialist consultant for the Bureau of Primary Health Care to promote Teaching Health Center GME funding eligibility at a national level.

Dr. Thomas-Hemak teaches and practices primary care as a dually board certified Internal Medicine and Pediatrics physician, in her hometown of Archbald at The Wright Center for Primary Care Mid Valley. She is a committed advocate of the Patient Centered Medical Home (PCMH) delivery model, promoting patient and community empowerment, constructive consumerism and patient self-management in an environment emphasizing team-based care delivery. She was recently selected to serve on the PCMH Advisory Council, established by statute to assist the Department of Human Services (DHS) in ensuring comprehensive review and development of a PCMH model for Pennsylvania.

Dr. Thomas-Hemak is also an advocate for Electronic Medical Records Meaningful Use, behavioral health integration and inter-professional healthcare workforce development. She has a particular passion for "Closing the Loop" and the leading role of Medical Homes in effective care coordination and transitions of care. She lead The Wright Center for Primary Care Mid Valley's 2011 \$6 million new construction project for a medical home educational showcase, which has on site Maternal and Family Health WIC Services, new Dental Hygiene and Behavioral Health service lines and flourishing affiliations with 11 regional academic institutions. This practice is actively engaged in several practice transformation initiatives, including the PAFP's Improving Performance in Practice Residency Program/Community Health Center Collaboratives. She served on the Pennsylvania

Department of Health's Chronic Care Steering, Care Transitions, Behavioral Health and Cost Containment committees. This practice also sponsored "The Wright Script," an inter-professional, pharmacy lead "Gold" designated team engaged in HRSA's Patient Safety and Pharmacy Collaborative.

Dr. Thomas-Hemak was a founding board member of Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine, Chair of the Academics Coordinating Committee and an active member of the Strategic Planning and Audit committees. She has pioneered implementation of medical home extension School Based Health Center services, inspiring new, federally funded, capital construction projects for School Based Health Centers within four regional public school districts. Dr. Thomas-Hemak notes her favorite professional activity as leveraging medical education and community resources to optimize patient care delivery within her own community. She is focused on caring for multi-generation families in a team based, "learning" environment and guiding The Wright Center's community-based mission to promote excellence in and the inextricable, responsive linkage of Graduate Medical Education, patient care and community.