

Perspectives for clinical excellence

Exploring a new model for university-affiliated medical centers



“We are melding the academic research expertise of the UMass faculty with a large commercial laboratory.”

Anne Higgins, PhD

UMass Memorial
Scientific Director, Cytogenics Lab
Quest Diagnostics

As the field of academic medicine and research evolves—and as many facilities continue to face stiff headwinds around budget, staffing, and resources—university-affiliated medical centers across the US are evolving their operating models.

One example is the University of Massachusetts (UMass) Memorial Health Care, which moved away from running its own laboratories and formed a joint venture with Quest Diagnostics, bringing a team of PhDs and MDs on-site to handle cytogenetics, molecular toxicology, special chemistry, microbiology, immunology, and other advanced lab services. Take a closer look at the UMass model:

The challenges

- Increasing market pressures and declining service reimbursements, leading to the need to monetize certain areas of lab business
- Integrating and training academic and commercial lab clinicians to handle large system volume
- Meeting the turnaround time and clinical expectations of an acute care setting

The solutions

- Invest in state-of-the-art equipment and robust service solutions
- Leverage some of the world’s largest automated specimen testing facilities
- Combine innovative technology and robotics with academic research expertise and experience

The results

- Deliver advanced diagnostic solutions at a massive scale to serve acute care needs in New England
- Analyze 10x more rare cases than before joint venture—allowing UMass to expand key diagnostic capabilities
- Offer academic staffing and clinical residency for UMass faculty, as well as CME courses, through the Quest lab

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