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**HEADLINE:** Hopkins hopes 'czar' offers right prescription

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**BODY:**

The Baltimore-Washington area's top-rated hospital completed a yearlong transition in its administration last week by appointing Dr. Edward D. Miller Jr. chief executive officer of Johns Hopkins Medicine in Baltimore. The new position, dubbed "medical czar," puts Dr. Miller in charge of all Hopkins hospital and medical school operations.

Dr. Miller oversees a 1,036-bed hospital, 6,000 employees and a \$600 million budget with research and teaching components beyond patient care, plus a medical school with 5,000 more staffers.

"Yeah, it's little bit awing," Dr. Miller said. "Hopkins for 100 years has been leader, and I want to make sure it stays that way."

Dr. Miller, 53, has been acting dean of the medical school since March and chairman of Hopkins' anesthesiology and critical-care department. Before his arrival in Baltimore in 1994, he was chairman of Columbia University's department of anesthesiology for eight years and president of the clinical faculty at the University of Virginia from 1975 to 1986.

Dr. Miller holds degrees from Ohio Wesleyan University and the University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry.

A search committee sought an outsider for the post until seeing Dr. Miller's 10 months of work as acting dean of the medical school.

"I think I'm really neither an insider nor an outsider," Dr. Miller said. "I've been here only 2 1/2 years, but I think I do understand the culture."

The appointment ends a period of internal management struggle at Hopkins. Dr. Miller said that building a consensus between the Hopkins community and the general public is a top priority.

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"This is an institution that wants people to succeed. It's going to be a group of people that will make this work into the next century," he said.

Ron Peterson, the recently appointed president of Johns Hopkins Hospital, said cost reductions will be a major priority as managed care continues its rapid growth in health care.

Dr. Miller, to whom Mr. Peterson now reports, said cost cutting will be undertaken throughout the Hopkins Health System and will likely result in at least some staff reductions.

"I think there will be a downsizing of some degree over the next couple of years," he said. "But we're still in the process of assessing what our needs are, and I think some layoffs may be averted through attrition. What we do know is that we absolutely have to be competitive. We can't stand by ourselves in an ivory tower.

"We're just more pricey. We have to closely look at reducing cost and still providing quality health care."

U.S. News & World Report has ranked Johns Hopkins the nation's best hospital for six years running, and American Health magazine last year bestowed a similar ranking.

**GRAPHIC:** Photo, Edward D. Miller Jr.

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