



NEWS RELEASE

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Tariot joins Banner Alzheimer's Institute

Arizona research community gains an ally in its fight against Alzheimer's disease

Pierre Tariot, M.D., a geriatric psychiatrist and internist known internationally for his research into drug therapies for Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia, recently joined Banner Health as the Associate Director of the Banner Alzheimer's Institute (BAI). Aside from direct patient care at the new Institute, he will collaborate with Dr. Eric Reiman and other partners in our Arizona research community to defeat an insidious disease that will impact half of those who live long enough to realize its devastation.

Dr. Tariot specializes in the care and study of people with Alzheimer's disease. Since 1986, he has been professor of Psychiatry, Medicine, Neurology, and Aging and Developmental Biology at the University of Rochester Medical Center.

During his tenure, Dr. Tariot and his colleagues contributed to virtually every large study of potential new treatments for Alzheimer's disease, helping to bring to fruition several medications now available to treat patients. He recently received the Turken Award, presented each year by the Alzheimer's Disease Center at the University of California at Los Angeles to a leading researcher nationally.

"We could not be more excited about the chance to have Dr. Tariot join us in Arizona. His expertise and international reputation in the field will help the Banner Alzheimer's Institute achieve its extremely important and ambitious scientific and clinical goals," said Banner Health President and CEO Peter Fine. "Dr. Tariot's recruitment was made possible by Banner's remarkable vision, the outstanding researchers, resources, and collaborative spirit in our statewide, multi-institutional Arizona Alzheimer's Disease Consortium, and the elected officials who have supported the Consortium's efforts to make a real difference in the lives of patients and families affected by Alzheimer's disease."

"Being able to attract a scientist and researcher of Dr. Tariot's reputation and expertise to Arizona is a significant step in building the State's reputation as a growing center for research into a wide range of mental illnesses, specifically Alzheimer's Disease, which has a significant impact on the state's population," said Dr. Joan Rankin-Shapiro, Vice President for Research at St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center, and a Board Member of both the state-supported Arizona Alzheimer's Research Center and the Institute for Mental Health Research (IMHR). "In addition to the great contributions he will make to the study of Alzheimer's disease, Dr. Tariot will provide the credibility, integrity and reputation to help attract additional scientists and researchers dedicated to unlocking the mysteries of these illnesses."

The Banner Alzheimer's Institute, recently approved by the Banner Health Board of Directors, is in the early stages of development as a ground-breaking clinical and research initiative. BAI will open in phases over the course of the year, but is scheduled to be fully operational for patients by October 2006.

Tariot will direct the Institute's Memory Disorders Clinic, Family and Community Services and Clinical Trials Center. His programs are intended to provide a model for the medical and non-medical care of patients and to help find effective ways to treat and prevent Alzheimer's disease in the shortest possible time.

He will also engage in collaborative projects with colleagues at Banner Good Samaritan Medical Center, at other institutions in the Arizona Alzheimer's Disease Consortium and with the Institute for Mental Health Research (IMHR), a comprehensive statewide research effort targeting the causes and treatment of mental illness and mental disease. IMHR was instrumental in opening the dialogue with Dr. Tariot that resulted in his appointment to the Banner Alzheimer's Institute.

During Tariot's tenure at Rochester, the University became well known in research circles for its contributions to Alzheimer's research. Through his research efforts, more than 3,000 people from the Rochester area took part in dozens of Alzheimer's studies that have helped advance treatment for millions of patients around the globe. He also directed a number of pivotal multi-center trials.

Alzheimer's disease is the most common cause of disabling memory and thinking problems in older people and the 4th leading cause of death in the United States. It afflicts ten percent of everyone over the age of 65 and almost half of everyone over the age of 85.

*Based in Phoenix, **Banner Health** is one of the largest, not-for-profit health care systems in the country. In the communities we serve – from Alaska to Arizona – Banner Health has more experience caring for patients than any other organization. We proudly believe this experience helps us realize our mission: We exist to make a difference in people's lives through excellent patient care.*

*The **Arizona Alzheimer's Disease Consortium** is a statewide laboratory without walls dedicated to the scientific study, early detection, and prevention of Alzheimer's disease. It includes more than 100 researchers from eight Arizona institutions, including Banner Health, the Sun Health Research Institute, the Barrow Neurological Institute, the Mayo Clinic, the Translational Genomics Research Institute, the Southern Arizona Veterans Administration Medical Center, Arizona State University, and the University of Arizona. It includes the state-supported Arizona Alzheimer's Research Center and the National-Institute on Aging-sponsored Arizona Alzheimer's Disease Core Center.*

*The **Institute for Mental Health Research (IMHR)** is an innovative foundation developed to improve the mental health of Arizonans by fostering recruitment of scientists with expertise in the study and treatment of mental disorders. IMHR is the nation's first comprehensive statewide research initiative dedicated to accelerating the understanding, treatment and, ultimately, prevention of brain diseases that cause mental illness through collaborations with the state's leading educational, research and medical institutions.*

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