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Media Contact: [Kara Gavin \(mailto: kegavin@med.umich.edu\)](mailto:kegavin@med.umich.edu) 734-764-2220

Could one of U-M's newest medical ideas help you or your family?

Medical School reports on record-breaking year for inventions, patents and efforts to bring research out of the lab and into the marketplace

ANN ARBOR, Mich. — You might not see a tiny University of Michigan “block M” logo on the drugs, devices and methods your doctors use in the future.



But new ideas and technology developed at U-M may very well be behind the care you get.

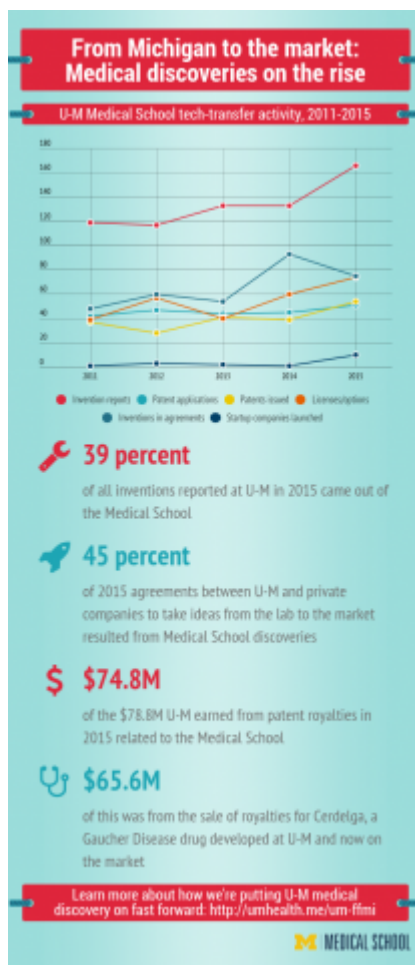
In fact, more of those ideas and inventions are making their way out of U-M research laboratories and into the “real world” than ever before.

New data show this kind of technology transfer activity by [U-M Medical School](http://medicine.umich.edu/medschool/) (<http://medicine.umich.edu/medschool/>) scientists and doctors rose again in the last year. From new cancer drugs and a way to track medical implants, to mobile apps that could help people with bipolar disorder and

parents installing child car seats, the school generated 39 percent of all inventions reported by U-M as a whole.

In the past two years, the school has introduced [new programs](http://medicine.umich.edu/medschool/research/office-research/innovation-business-development) (http://medicine.umich.edu/medschool/research/office-research/innovation-business-development) to help the teams that come up with these new ideas.

“We know that much of the research we do won’t make a difference for patients unless we help it bridge the gap between the university and the marketplace,” says James O. Woolliscroft, M.D., dean of the Medical School. “That’s why we have invested so heavily in resources to help our researchers develop their ideas in ways that can be attractive to industry, learn how to work with industry on collaborative research, and even start new companies of their own.”



[Click the image to see it larger](#)

http://www.uofmhealth.org/sites/default/files/Tech_transfer_2015.png



The increase in new inventions was aided by a partnership between [U-M Tech Transfer](http://www.techtransfer.umich.edu/) (http://www.techtransfer.umich.edu/) and a new program, the [Fast Forward Medical](http://medicine.umich.edu/medschool/research/office-research/innovation-business-development)

[Innovation \(FFMI\)](http://medicine.umich.edu/medschool/research/office-research/innovation-business-development) (http://medicine.umich.edu/medschool/research/office-research/innovation-business-development) program, launched in 2014. This partnership includes programs to encourage and educate faculty researchers, and resources to further develop emerging new ideas.

In the fiscal year that ended in June, Medical School tech transfer activity resulted in:

- 166 new inventions, up from 133 the year before
- 51 new patent applications, up from 45
- 54 patents awarded, up from 39
- 74 new option and license agreements with industry, up from 60

- 10 new startup companies, up from 1.
- \$74.8 million in revenues from Medical School tech transfer license agreements. A substantial component of these revenues is from a monetization agreement connected to a previous license for a drug initially developed at U-M to help patients with Gaucher disease.

The school is reinvesting much of its share of these revenues into an effort to improve how new drugs and ideas get tested in patients and healthy people who volunteer for clinical trials.

In addition to moving ideas from U-M labs to the market, the Medical School has also worked to increase its partnerships with companies that need to test their new ideas, or develop them further, with independent help from U-M doctors and scientists:

- 13 percent of Medical School research funding now comes from industry, with \$63.7M in funding granted by 265 companies in FY14.
- Industry grants for research at the Medical School rose 36 percent in the last four years.
- More than 516 clinical trials sponsored by industry are under way at U-M hospitals and clinics, giving patients access to the latest innovations and provides independent testing of future products.

"The research we do at this Medical School has an incredible potential to help patients in the near and long term, and we're working to unleash more of that potential than ever before."

- Kevin Ward, M.D., Executive Director, Fast Forward Medical Innovation

The long journey from a spark of an idea, to a product that can help patients, has many potential detours and potholes that can keep researchers from reaching their goal.

The Medical School now offers training, funding and mentoring that can help keep them on the path. This includes:

- "Tech mining" that actively looks at what's going on in Medical School labs with an eye toward finding ideas that could become products
- Millions of dollars in pre-seed funding to further develop emerging startups for private investment. The school even held an event based on the popular TV show "Shark Tank" that let teams compete in front of real-world investors.
- Commercialization education for faculty and students – more than 500 of whom signed up in the first year
- Other training, online and in person
- An innovation course for young doctors while they are still in training
- A 'path of excellence' for medical students who want to start leaning about innovation and entrepreneurship as part of their curriculum

- A “speed dating” event to connect those who have ideas for health apps and computer programs with those who have the skills to make them a reality
- An intensive technology development course for teams that provides a pathway to building the business case for their research-based project to generate a product

“It’s been a whirlwind since we launched Fast Forward Medical Innovation, but these results and the incredible pipeline of other ideas we’re building prove that investing in innovation can truly pay off,” says Kevin Ward, M.D., executive director of FFMI. “The research we do at this Medical School has an incredible potential to help patients in the near and long term, and we’re working to unleash more of that potential than ever before. Working closely with our innovation partners around campus including the UM Tech Transfer Office greatly enhances our ability to move those great ideas to impact ”

Learn more about the Fast Forward Medical Innovation Initiative:

<http://umhealth.me/um-ffmi>

<http://umhealth.me/um-ffmi>

For more information on U-M Tech Transfer: <http://techtransfer.umich.edu>

<mailto:techtransfer@umich.edu>



Kevin Ward, M.D.

Physicians / Providers

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[Pierre Coulombe, Ph.D. to lead U-M Department of Cell & Developmental Biology \(/news/archive/201706/pierre-coulombe-phd-lead-u-m-department-cell-developmental\)](/news/archive/201706/pierre-coulombe-phd-lead-u-m-department-cell-developmental)

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Media Inquiries: 734-764-2220 8 a.m.-5 p.m. ET

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