

2026 Pioneer Award Recipient

Dr. Jan Busby-Whitehead



Dr. Jan Busby-Whitehead is a board-certified internist and geriatrician who has dedicated her career to improving geriatric care in North Carolina through education, research, direct care, advocacy, and inspiring future healthcare professionals. An active clinician, she has received the UNC Health and UNC Faculty Practice Carolina Care Excellence Award for multiple years. She is the M. Andrew Greganti Distinguished Professor of Medicine at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, founding Chief of the UNC Chapel Hill Division of Geriatric Medicine in the Department of Medicine, and the founding and current Director of the UNC Center for Aging and Health which conducts clinical, educational and health services research focused on geriatric syndromes. Throughout her career, she has prioritized aging research and funded programs that develop and further geriatric education. She is the co-lead of the

Research and Education component for the Duke-UNC Alzheimer's Disease Research Center; Director of the Medical Student Training in Aging Research program; and Director of the Carolina Geriatric Workforce Enhancement Program, providing geriatric training and education across all 100 counties in NC.

Of the accolades Dr. Busby-Whitehead has received over her career, highlights include: serving as President of the National Association for Geriatric Education; serving as Chair of the Board of the American Geriatrics Society's Health in Aging Foundation since 2009; and currently serving on the North Carolina Governor's Advisory Council on Aging.

Dr. Busby-Whitehead has been recognized for her contributions through several awards. She has been selected as one of the Best Doctors in America in multiple years. In 2022, she received the Clinician Change Maker Award from the Snow Approach Foundation, recognizing her innovative efforts to improve the lives of people living with dementia and their families. She was principle investigator on the UNC Dementia Friendly Hospital Initiative, a groundbreaking program that has improved the quality of care and healthcare experiences for patients with dementia throughout the state. This program received the Triangle Business Journal Health Care Heroes Award for Community Outreach in 2020.