

Summary of Ad Hoc Group Town Hall Meeting September 18, 2009

FY 2011 Messaging

Mona Miller and Jon Retzlaff led a discussion on broad messaging themes that the community could emphasize in FY 2011:

- Keep the momentum going for medical progress in FY 2011 and build on NIH's expanded capacity to improve health, power economic growth and innovation, and advance science.
- Ensure the nation seizes the historic scientific and economic momentum generated by the Recovery Act.
- The medical advocacy community stands united in support of bold funding for NIH overall in FY 2011, while we also advocate for our own specific areas of concern.

Groups also suggested other themes that could be reinforced with solid examples and statistics:

- Investments in medical research result in savings and also generate economic productivity.
- NIH can play an important role in realizing the goals of health care reform, including prevention and wellness activities and comparative effectiveness research.
- Boom and bust cycles have a negative impact on the next generation of researchers.
- Every meritorious research project that NIH is unable to fund is a missed opportunity to improve health and the quality of life.
- Science is interdisciplinary in nature; the distinction between physical and life sciences is often artificial, and strong support for all scientific disciplines is necessary for the most optimal outcomes.

There are several tools to facilitate the community's advocacy efforts. NIH maintains the RePORT tool on its website, which lists funding information by state and Congressional district: <http://report.nih.gov/index.aspx>. The site includes preliminary information about the Recovery Act awards as well: <http://report.nih.gov/recovery/index.aspx>. Additionally, the NIH recently unveiled its new RePORTER tool, which includes additional searchable information: <http://projectreporter.nih.gov/reporter.cfm>

FY 2011 Funding Recommendations

Howard Garrison and Dave Moore led a discussion to begin conceptualizing the community's funding priorities for FY 2011. Though additional information about FY 2010 is needed before the community will be able to formulate a concrete funding recommendation, the group agreed that it is important to prepare for the FY 2011 cycle earlier in the process. Items for consideration:

- How should ARRA funding be incorporated into the base? Over what timeframe?

- How can the community balance “bold and visionary” funding requests that advance the nation’s scientific potential with the “predictable and sustainable” long-term growth that is necessary to avoid peaks and valleys that are detrimental to scientific progress?
- How will the NIH community differentiate itself from the other long-term priorities that were funded in ARRA?
- Will activities that may be authorized in health care reform legislation increase the number of competing funding priorities?
- How will the community illustrate the capacity lost by NIH (and the impact on human health and the economy) if the investment is not sustained?

The group agreed that it is important for the community to rally behind a unified message of “big picture” support for NIH overall, while maintaining advocacy activities for individual priorities.