

## **National Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK) Advisory Council Meeting**

### **Division of Kidney, Urologic, and Hematologic Diseases Advisory Subcouncil Meeting May 17, 2023**

#### **Advisory Council KUH Subcommittee Members:**

Dr. Iain Drummond (MDI Biological Laboratory)  
Ms. Dawn Edwards (American Association of Kidney Patients)  
Dr. Mark Nelson (University of Vermont)  
Dr. Keith Norris (University of California at Los Angeles)  
Dr. David Penson (Vanderbilt University)  
Dr. Kathleen Sakamoto (Stanford University)

#### **NIH/NIDDK/KUH Staff:**

Dr. Kevin Abbott	Dr. Chris Mullins
Dr. Julie Barthold	Dr. Deepak Nihalani
Dr. Eric Brunskill	Dr. Jenna Norton
Dr. Kevin Chan	Dr. Van Nguyen
Mr. Randy Copeland	Mr. Matt Oldham
Ms. Emily Duggan	Dr. Afshin Parsa*
Dr. Deb Gipson	Ms. Aretina Perry-Jones
Ms. Shannon Givens	Dr. Matt Portnoy
Dr. Daniel Gossett	Dr. Tracy Rankin
Dr. Raquel Greer	Dr. Cindy Roy
Dr. Xiaduo Guo	Dr. Anna Sadusky
Dr. Shilpa Hattangadi	Dr. Ivonne Schulman
Dr. Jason Hoffert	Ms. Neha Shah
Dr. Chris Ketchum	Ms. Aliecia Shepherd
Dr. Paul Kimmel	Dr. Victoria Spruance
Dr. Ziya Kirkali	Dr. Robert Star
Dr. Karl Malik	Mr. Jonathan Teinor
Dr. Susan Mendley	Dr. Ken Wilkins*

#### **Welcome and Introductions**

Dr. Star welcomed council members and attendees to the 222<sup>nd</sup> KUH subcouncil meeting. Drs. Drummond, Stewart, and Nelson led the motion to approve the meeting minutes from January subcouncil. Dr. Star introduced Dr. Debbie Gipson, the new Senior Scientific Officer for Kidney Precision Medicine Trials.

#### **Upcoming Meetings and Workshops**

Dr. Star noted several upcoming meetings and workshops and commented that this information was available on the ECB for future reference.

## **KUH Initiatives**

Staff members presented the following FY2025 initiatives for consideration:

- Technology Hub INcubator for the Kidney (THINK) (New): Dr. Brunskill

Councilors offered the following feedback:

- Dr. Drummond was supportive of the THINK initiative. There was discussion on possible paths forward on how a THINK consortium would be structured. Dr. Drummond commented on the approach of structuring THINK with a core team of investigators with shared objectives to align efforts and maintain a cohesive focus on the common goal rather than working on individual projects. Dr. Drummond also recommended to employ a gene therapy approach to create regulatory networks that could be a potentially transformative strategy.
- Polycystic Kidney Disease Research Consortium (Renewal): Dr. Maric-Bilkan

Councilors offered the following feedback:

- Dr. Drummond commented that the innovation intended to be seeded by the Opportunity Pool program should not be subject to a traditional review and added that a special review would be needed to appropriately evaluate investigator's applications.
- Dr. Stewart queried if the Opportunity Pool would provide small or large awards. Dr. Maric-Bilkan noted that the program is structured to allow Administrators to determine the size of the program.
- Dr. Nelson queried what type of applicants would be targeted for the Opportunity pool awards. Dr. Maric-Bilkan noted that the PKD Coordinating Center will cast a broad net to attract investigators to this program, including those outside the PKD/renal field.
- National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (Renewal): Dr. Abbott
  - Councilors expressed support for this initiative.
- Kidney Technology Development Research Education Program (Expansion): Dr. Spruance

Councilors offered the following feedback:

- Dr. Drummond expressed support for the collaboration with NIBIB which offers a grand prize and several honorable mention prizes.
- NIDDK Extramural Digital Pathology Repository (Renewal): Dr. Roy (Dr. Star recused himself from the discussion)
  - Councilors expressed support for this initiative.
- PheNOtyping Women at Risk for Lower Urinary Tract Symptoms (NO-LUTS) (New): Dr. Barthold

Councilors offered the following feedback:

- Dr. Penson noted that this is an understudied topic in the urologic community and expressed support for this initiative.

- Stimulating Urology Interdisciplinary Team Opportunity Research (SUITOR) (Renewal): Drs. Barthold

Councilors offered the following feedback:

- Dr. Penson noted support for this initiative and additionally suggested other benign urologic disease topics such as andrology and stone disease, while noting that neurourology is a small segment of urology researchers. Dr. Barthold noted that NICHD is tasked with efforts related to male infertility.
- Dr. Nelson commented that neurourology is relevant to incontinence and noted that underactive bladder is also a concern within the urology community as irreversible damage can occur due to a lack of urination. He added that interstitial cystitis pain is another understudied area. Dr. Nelson commented that this initiative can recruit other scientists into the field as pain has broad applicability.
- Stimulating Hematology Investigation: New Endeavors (SHINE) (Renewal): Dr. Roy

Councilors offered the following feedback:

- Dr. Sakamoto commented that this is an important program for hematology researchers and suggested an initiative similar to THINK to build a healthy bone marrow as currently there are many knowledge gaps in the field without models. She also commented that other SHINE topics may include engineering and bioinformatics.
- Cooperative Centers of Excellence in Hematology (CCEH) (Renewal): Dr. Norton

Councilors offered the following feedback:

- Dr. Sakamoto expressed support for the Coordinating Center to provide outreach and resources to the community.
- Gut Microbiota and Kidney Diseases (GRAND) (Workshop): Dr. Nihalani
  - Councilors expressed support for this initiative.
- Vascular Access (Workshop): Dr. Abbott

Councilors offered the following feedback:

- Dr. Norris noted this is an important area. He suggested involving CMS staff in this effort to get feedback on performance metrics.
- Listening Circle: Health Disparities Research in Hematological Diseases (Workshop): Dr. Hattangadi

Councilors offered the following feedback:

- Dr. Sakamoto commented that more work should be done in this area and requested meeting materials to disseminate to the larger community. She also volunteered to participate on the organizing committee.
- Building a diverse and resilient biomedical workforce (Workshop): Dr. Maric-Bilkan

Councilors offered the following feedback:

- Dr. Nelson expressed support for this workshop and noted that many individuals in his lab have moved to industry as the science is focused on generating new therapeutics

versus holding a position as an Assistant Professor. He also expressed concern that the financial incentives at most academic institutions may not be sufficient to recruit and attract investigators.

- Dr. Drummond expressed concern that many new academic programs are now advertising great financial incentives.
- Dr. Penson commented that this workshop is an important program for PhDs. He also noted that, in addition to financial challenges, investigators face other issues such as job security and the approach to discovery research from academia versus industry. Dr. Penson emphasized that more clinicians and physicians, including those in benign urology, are moving to industry to avoid job security related issues and the stresses within clinical practice and academia.
- Dr. Norris commented that the amount of training currently needed for investigators to be highly competitive requires lengthy training periods. He noted that industry provides a space where investigators can feel like they are making an impact as opposed to academia, which presents itself as a pure approach to science. Additionally, academia's approach does not recognize or value diversity and equity issues. Although basic science within academia could be applicable to the community, academia has not embraced how impactful basic science programs can influence community health.

### **KUH Closed Session**

Dr. Star commented on the importance of confidentiality during closed session. Council members approved several closed business items.