

Pennsylvania Department of Health
Health Research Advisory Committee
Health & Welfare Building, Room 129
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

Meeting Minutes
Monday, October 1, 2018
1:00 PM to 2:30 PM

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

In person

- Rachel Levine, MD, Secretary of Health and Chair of the Committee, Pennsylvania Department of Health

Via WebEx

- Dwight Davis, MD, Professor of Medicine and Medical Director, Cardiac Rehabilitation Program, Pennsylvania State University School of Medicine
- Karen Wolk Feinstein, PhD, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Jewish Healthcare Foundation and Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative
- Arthur Levine, MD, Senior Vice Chancellor for Health Sciences and Dean of the School of Medicine, University of Pittsburgh; Maggie McDonald attended at his request
- Michele Masucci, PhD, Vice President for Research; Professor, Department of Geography and Urban Studies; Director, Information Technology and Society Research Group, Temple University
- Donna Gentile O'Donnell, PhD, Special Assistant to the President and Senior Vice President of Innovation Programs and Partnerships, Thomas Jefferson University
- Peter Tombros, MBA, Professor and Distinguished Executive in Residence, Eberly College of Science BS/MBA Program, Penn State University
- Pat Vance, retired Senator, having represented the 31st State Senatorial District

Absent

- Michael Parmacek, MD, Frank Wister Thomas Professor of Medicine; Chair, Department of Medicine and Director of the Penn Cardiovascular Institute, University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine

OTHERS PRESENT:

Department of Health (DOH) staff in attendance

- Sarah Boateng, Executive Deputy, DOH
- Alison Taylor, Chief Counsel, DOH
- Keith Fickel, Esq., Office of Legal Counsel, DOH
- Penny E. Harris, M.Ed., CAC, LPC, Director, Health Research Office
- Sylvia Golas, DMD, MPH, Public Health Program Administrator, Health Research Office
- Chris Albright, Administrative Officer, Health Research Office

Others in attendance

- Mary M. Keenan, Webber Associates
- John Anthony, Pennsylvania State University
- Michael Lane, Wojdak Government Relations
- Dennis A. Lynch, Temple University

➤ Welcome and introductions

Secretary Levine welcomed Health Research Advisory Committee (Committee) members, Department of Health (DOH) staff, and members of the public to the meeting.

Secretary Levine noted the primary purpose of the meeting was to decide on the non-formula priority(ies) for State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2019-2020.

➤ Review and approval of May 31, 2018, minutes

Ms. Vance moved to accept the minutes.

Dr. Davis seconded the motion.

No opposition or abstentions.

The motion passed unanimously.

➤ Review of the CURE program, priorities, types of funding, and funding status

Secretary Levine provided an overview of the Tobacco Settlement Act, explaining the allocation of research funding into Formula 70%/Non-formula 30%. Additionally, the Secretary reviewed the decision-making process used by the Committee for Non-formula priorities.

Secretary Levine shared the status of the Request for Application (RFA) for the opioid priority. DOH received six submissions in response to the RFA. The peer review panel was scheduled for the end of October 2018 and the grant period for the opioid application will start June 1, 2019.

The formula grant priorities for 2019-2020 were confirmed by the Committee at the May 2018 meeting as clinical, health services, and/or biomedical research.

The two non-formula categories of clinical and health services research, and other research for 2019-2020 were combined for the purpose of priority setting by the Committee at the May meeting.

➤ Planning for the identification of the non-formula funds priority for 2020-2021

Secretary Levine reminded the members of the decision-making processes used in the past by the Committee, which included requesting public testimony submissions, requesting presentations and workshops, and writing white papers. The opportunity to use public testimony submissions for the 2020-2021 decision-making process was introduced.

The members discussed concerns about the coordination process of members' institutions for submissions, identification of the parameters based on the CURE requirements for submission in advance, and how the opportunity would be communicated to the public.

Next steps: The program will provide a proposal at the next meeting of how the process would occur.

➤ Research Priorities for Non-formula Funds for 2019-2020

Secretary Levine reviewed with the members the steps that had been taken regarding the identification of the 2019-2020 non-formula priority. Three white papers had been submitted for the members to review. The submissions included “Lyme Disease” by Secretary Levine, “Adolescent Behavioral Health” by Dr. Feinstein and “Alzheimer’s” by Dr. Art Levine.

Secretary Levine requested that each member comment on the white papers. Dr. O’Donnell joined the call during this discussion. *Secretary Levine* called upon each member to share their comments on the papers submitted. The comments identified several areas of concern. One issue was a question of the capabilities of Commonwealth institutions to provide robust research for Lyme disease as is possible for Alzheimer research. The significance of the opioid crisis with young people was confirmed. A question was raised regarding the extent of funds available for adolescent behavioral health from the National Institute for Mental Health.

Secretary Levine reviewed the preferences of the members regarding the three topics: two members identified a preference for Adolescent Behavioral Health, four for Alzheimer’s disease, and two for Lyme disease. *Secretary Levine* confirmed the accuracy of this outcome with the members and inquired if there were any more questions or discussion.

Secretary Levine called for a motion to recommend the 2019-2020 non-formula priority be Alzheimer’s.

Dr. Levine so moved.

Dr. Masucci seconded the motion.

Secretary Levine performed a roll call with seven for the motion and one opposed. The motion passed.

Secretary Levine expressed her gratitude for the service of the Committee members, their ideas, input, and time. The 2019-2020 non-formula priority recommendation is Alzheimer’s. The legal office will review for language.

The next meeting will be scheduled for early 2019.

➤ Meeting adjournment

Secretary Levine called for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Dr. O’Donnell so moved.

Dr. Davis seconded the motion.

No opposition or abstentions.

The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:50 p.m.