

**U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
National Institutes of Health (NIH)
Office of the Director (OD)
Division of Program Coordination, Planning, and Strategic Initiatives (DPCPSI)**

**Council of Councils Meeting
December 30, 2020**

Meeting Minutes

I. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

James M. Anderson, M.D., Ph.D., Director, DPCPSI, welcomed participants, NIH staff members, and members of the public to the meeting of the Council of Councils. The virtual meeting began at 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, December 30, 2020. The meeting attendees are identified below.

A. Attendance

1. Council Members

Council Members Present

Chair: James M. Anderson, M.D., Ph.D., Director, DPCPSI

Executive Secretary: Robin Kawazoe, Deputy Director, DPCPSI

Maria Rosario G. Araneta, Ph.D., M.P.H., University of California, San Diego, La Jolla, CA

Kristin Ardlie, Ph.D., Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard, Cambridge, MA

Jeffrey R. Botkin, M.D., M.P.H., The University of Utah, Salt Lake City, UT

Linda Chang, M.D., FAAN, FANA, University of Maryland School of Medicine,
Baltimore, MD

Graham A. Colditz, M.D., Dr.P.H., M.P.H., Washington University School of Medicine in
St. Louis, St. Louis, MO

Andrew P. Feinberg, M.D., M.P.H., Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD

Rick Horwitz, Ph.D., Allen Institute for Cell Science, Seattle, WA

Kevin B. Johnson, M.D., M.S., Vanderbilt University Medical Center, Nashville, TN

R. Paul Johnson, M.D., Emory University School of Medicine, Atlanta, GA

Paul J. Kenny, Ph.D., Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, New York, NY

Gary A. Koretzky, M.D., Ph.D., Weill Cornell Medical College, New York, NY

Richard D. Krugman, M.D., University of Colorado School of Medicine, Aurora, CO

Michael D. Lairmore, D.V.M., Ph.D., University of California, Davis, Davis, CA

Jian-Dong Li, M.D., Ph.D., Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA

Edith P. Mitchell, M.D., FACP, Thomas Jefferson University, Philadelphia, PA

Charles P. Mouton, M.D., M.S., The University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston,
Galveston, TX

Megan O'Boyle, Phelan-McDermid Syndrome Data Network, Arlington, VA

Susan Sanchez, Ph.D., The University of Georgia, Athens, GA

Jean E. Schaffer, M.D., Joslin Diabetes Center, Boston, MA

Scout, Ph.D., National LGBT Cancer Network, Pawtucket, RI

Anna Maria Siega-Riz, Ph.D., M.S., University of Massachusetts Amherst, Amherst, MA

Russell N. Van Gelder, M.D., Ph.D., University of Washington, Seattle, WA

Council Members Absent

Maria L. Acebal, J.D., The Aspen Institute, Washington, DC

Patricia D. Hurn, Ph.D., R.N., University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI

Sachin Kheterpal, M.D., M.B.A., University of Michigan Medical School, Ann Arbor, MI

Rhonda Robinson-Beale, M.D., Blue Cross of Idaho, Meridian, ID

2. *Ex Officio* Members Absent

Lawrence A. Tabak, D.D.S., Ph.D., Principal Deputy Director, NIH

3. Presenters

James M. Anderson, M.D., Ph.D., Director, DPCPSI

Griffin P. Rodgers, M.D., MACP, Director, National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK), NIH

4. NIH Staff and Guests

In addition to Council members, presenters, and Council Liaisons, others in attendance included NIH staff and interested members of the public.

B. Announcements and Updates

Robin Kawazoe, Deputy Director of DPCPSI, acting as the executive secretary for the NIH Council of Councils, reviewed the following:

- Council members are Special Government Employees during the days of Council meetings and are therefore subject to the rules of conduct governing federal employees.
- Each Council member submitted a financial disclosure form and conflict-of-interest statement in compliance with federal requirements for membership on advisory councils. The financial disclosures are used to assess real and perceived conflicts of interest, and Council members must recuse themselves from the meeting during discussions of any items for which conflicts were identified.
- Time is allotted for discussion between the Council members and presenters at this meeting. The public may submit comments in writing; instructions are available in the *Federal Register* notice for the meeting, which was published on December 18, 2020.
- Minutes from today's meeting will be posted to the DPCPSI Council website.

C. Future Meeting Dates

The January 29 Council meeting will be held in a virtual format. All future Council meeting dates are listed on the DPCPSI Council website.

II. PROPOSED ADDITION OF A NEW OFFICE TO DPCPSI

Griffin P. Rodgers, M.D., MACP, Director, NIDDK, NIH, presented an update on nutrition research at the NIH and ongoing implementation of the *2020–2030 Strategic Plan for NIH Nutrition Research*. The Nutrition Research Task Force was initially charged with identifying scientific opportunities and key

research gaps in nutrition research at the NIH. The task force developed a 10-year strategic plan for NIH-supported nutrition research, which emphasizes an overarching theme of precision nutrition and aims to catalyze a modernization of nutrition research and ensure rigor and consistency across biomedical research studies that examine the role of diet in disease. The four main goals of the strategic plan are to spur discovery and innovation through foundational research, investigate the role of dietary patterns and behavior on optimal health, define the role of nutrition across the lifespan, and reduce the burden of disease in the clinical setting through nutrition. The strategic plan also outlined five crosscutting research areas: minority health and health disparities; health of women; rigor and reproducibility; data science, systems science, and artificial intelligence; and training the next generation of the nutrition science workforce.

Nutrition research itself is a crosscutting topic at the NIH, with \$1.9 billion in funding for more than 4,600 nutrition research projects at the NIH in fiscal year 2019. One challenge is engaging all relevant Institutes, Centers, and Offices (ICOs); for example, neuroscience expertise is needed to address issues related to diet and neurodegenerative disease; neurodevelopment; imaging; and the neurobiology of hunger, satiety, and food choices. Seven trans-NIH implementation working groups coordinated by the Office of Nutrition Research have been working for the past year to implement the goals of the strategic plan by developing activities and initiatives that apply across the NIH. The working groups have performed portfolio analysis, developed short- and long-term goals, and outlined workshop concepts and guidance for the implementation of trans-NIH initiatives. As a result of the working groups' activities, 17 ICOs have participated in the implementation of the strategic plan. Dr. Rodgers reiterated that additional implementation is needed, particularly in the neuroscience field.

In September, the Council cleared the concept titled Nutrition for Precision Health powered by the *All of Us* research program, a Common Fund program dedicated to precision nutrition and the first ancillary study using the *All of Us* cohort. Dr. Rodgers reviewed the plan for the study, which will be the largest precision nutrition study ever conducted and will include examination of contextual factors that could be sources of individual variability in dietary responses and microbiome ecology, as well as use of *All of Us* data. This study will provide a rich data source leading to the development of both individual dietary recommendations and recommendations for specific population groups. Dr. Rodgers reminded attendees that *All of Us* is an ideal partner for this study because of its large cohort and commitment to diversity that reflects the diversity of the United States, as well as its infrastructure and extensive data. *All of Us* also has data-sharing policies that allow any qualified research group to access the data, and Dr. Rodgers expected that the Nutrition for Precision Health study would add value back to *All of Us* by introducing new data, such as microbiome information, and tailored dietary recommendations.

Dr. Anderson explained the plan to transfer the Office of Nutrition Research from the NIDDK to DPCPSI, increasing the Office's ability to coordinate and lead NIH-wide nutrition research and implementation of the strategic plan. DPCPSI takes a central role in coordinating areas of NIH's research that are particularly crosscutting; each DPCPSI Office shares in the mission to identify, coordinate, manage, and lead research activities in partnership with Institutes. Some Offices fulfill this mission by creating strategic plans specific to their Office, but others are charged with preparing NIH-wide strategic plans for their research area of emphasis, as the Office of Nutrition Research would continue to do under DPCPSI. Many of these Offices use such tactics as co-funding, coordinating with all Institutes, or organizing workshops and funding opportunities to ensure trans-NIH planning in their research area.

External support for moving the Office is strong, as shown in a public comment period. Several recent publications also have suggested stronger coordination of nutrition research within and across government agencies. If approved, the Office would be transferred to DPCPSI within this fiscal year. Its predominant charge would be to oversee implementation of the strategic plan, which already has begun through the working groups, and to serve as the NIH-wide voice and point-of-contact for nutrition research. The

Office also would oversee the Nutrition for Precision Health program, with the co-chairs of the Nutrition Research Task Force continuing to lead this program. Dr. Anderson also suggested that the senior leadership of the Office would be expanded immediately to include representatives from more ICOs.

Discussion Highlights

- Dr. Jean Schaffer expressed her strong enthusiasm for the transfer of the Office of Nutrition Research, noting that this is a well-planned evolution of the Office.
- Dr. Charles Mouton agreed with the plan and asked about the inclusion of representatives from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), particularly regarding implementation. Dr. Christopher Lynch, Director of the Office of Nutrition Research, NIDDK, explained that a nutrition research coordinating meeting occurs every other month and includes representatives from many federal agencies. Additionally, an interagency committee on human nutrition research, including the Assistant Secretary for Health and chief scientist from the USDA, meets several times per year. These meetings allow the coordination of the broad field of nutrition research across many government agencies.
- Dr. Maria Rosario Araneta noted her excitement for this proposal, as well as for the Nutrition Research for Precision Health project. She suggested several additional avenues to explore, including the Dutch Winter Famine Study, the developmental effects of food insecurity caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the breastmilk microbiome, and issues of access.
- Dr. Michael Lairmore agreed with the proposed transfer and asked how the Office of Dietary Supplements (ODS) will interface with the Office of Nutrition Research and whether DPCPSI uses certain principles to identify Offices or crosscutting research areas appropriate for future inclusion in its mission. Dr. Anderson responded that the term “dietary supplements” has a specific definition, and the ODS has a specific set of requirements outlined by Congress. In the future, NIH may consider exactly what areas fall within the charge of each office, will look to maintain unique responsibilities, and each office will inform the other’s work. Regarding which areas of research DPCPSI should oversee, Dr. Anderson explained that the NIH director has the authority to create Offices within DPCPSI, and this occurs when there is a compelling opportunity or need for central coordination.
- Dr. Andrew Feinberg noted that he thought the plan to transfer ONR was wonderful and suggested incorporating high-risk, high-reward research related to nutrition. Dr. Rodgers commented on the opportunity to gain additional support for nutritional research that requires broad coordination. Dr. Anderson added that nutrition researchers are welcome to apply to the Common Fund’s High Risk, High Reward Programs.
- Dr. Edith Mitchell asked how the Office will integrate community engagement, particularly in high-risk communities with distrust in organized medicine. Dr. Rodgers emphasized that the NIDDK has prioritized community engagement for many years, and the lessons learned at the NIDDK may be transferrable to some of the ongoing and new efforts through the Office of Nutrition Research. He reiterated that minority health is one crosscutting area of implementation of the strategic plan. Dr. Lynch added that one implementation working group focuses on implementation science strategies in different communities; another works on social determinants of health and nutrition health disparities.
- Dr. Linda Chang commended the focus on increasing the involvement of neuroscience researchers. She suggested directly contacting some of the largest data-generating projects. Dr. Rodgers confirmed that such collaborations are under discussion and noted that one implementation science working group focuses on this topic.

- Dr. Anna Maria Siega-Riz expressed her support as a nutritionist and emphasized the significant potential for progress offered by this proposal.
- Dr. Paul Johnson emphasized the potential role for interim studies of animal models to define mechanisms related to precision nutrition.

XI. CLOSING REMARKS

Dr. Anderson thanked the Council members for their contributions at this meeting. He reminded the members that the next Council meeting is scheduled for January 29, 2021.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Dr. Anderson adjourned the meeting at 3:01 p.m. on December 30, 2020.

XIII. CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge, the foregoing summary minutes are accurate and complete.

James M. Anderson, M.D., Ph.D.
Chair, NIH Council of Councils
Director, DPCPSI, OD, NIH

Date

Robin Kawazoe
Acting Executive Secretary, NIH Council of Councils
Deputy Director, DPCPSI, OD, NIH

Date