



**New Jersey Department of Health
Governor's Council for Medical Research and Treatment of Autism
Meeting Minutes –September 8, 2014 (ratified)**

Council Members Present

Caroline Eggerding, M.D., Division Head, Department of Pediatric Neurology and Development Cooper Children's Regional Hospital and Chairperson of the Governor's Council for Medical Research and Treatment of Autism, Healthcare Organization Representative

B. Madeleine Goldfarb, MA, Founder/Director of the Noah's Ark Children's Association, Autism Organization Representative

Ketan Kansagra, M.D., FAAP, Neonatologist, Children's Hospital of New Jersey at Newark Beth Israel Medical Center, Academic Institution Representative

Gary Weitzen, BA, Executive Director, Parents of Autistic Children (POAC) Autism Services, Organization Representative

Absent

Elizabeth K. Bell, BS, volunteer and independent contractor with Autism Speaks, Autism Organization Representative

Susan P. Evans, Ed.D. Education Program Specialist for Early Intervention Program, NJ Department of Health, Commissioner of Health Appointee

NJ Department of Health (DOH) Attendees

Linda N. Bocclair, M.Ed., MBA
Executive Assistant, Governor's Council for Medical Research and Treatment of Autism

Mary Ray, Contract Administrator 2
Governor's Council for Medical Research and Treatment of Autism
Commission on Brain Injury Research
Commission on Spinal Cord Research

Daphne Robinson, Ph.D., Consultant, Scientific Planning Consulting

Public Attendees

Audrey Mars, M.D., Hunterdon Medical Center, Regional Autism Center

Gerard Costa, Ph.D., Center for Autism and Early Childhood Mental Health at Montclair State University and Principal Investigator, NJ ACE Coordinating Center

Karen Hood-Kasim MPH, Project Coordinator, NJ ACE Coordinating Center

Emanuel DiCicco-Bloom, M.D., Rutgers University

James Millonig, Ph.D., Rutgers University

I. Welcome - Council Chairperson, Dr. Caroline Eggerding called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM and welcomed everyone.

II. Public Meetings Act Announcement- Dr. Eggerding read the Public Meetings Act, followed by roll call.

III. Approval of the June 30, 2014 Council Meeting Minutes

Dr. Eggerding called for a motion to approve the June 30, 2014 meeting minutes. MOTION by Ms. Goldfarb to approve the minutes was seconded by Mr. Weitzen. No discussion.

MOTION to approve the June 30, 2014 meeting minutes was passed with three in favor and one abstention.

IV. Approval of 2015 Council meeting calendar

Dr. Eggerding called for a motion for approval of the 2015 Council meeting calendar. MOTION by Ms. Goldfarb to approve the minutes was seconded by Mr. Weitzen. No discussion.

MOTION to approve the 2015 Council meeting calendar was passed with all in favor.

Note: Council will be asked, at their December 1, 2014 meeting, to consider an alternate date for the September 14, 2015 meeting (Rosh Hashanah). This was an oversight in scheduling.

V. Research presentations, Emanuel DiCicco-Bloom, M.D. and James Millonig, Ph.D.

Drs. DiCicco-Bloom and Millonig presented their research projects entitled “En2 Regulates Forebrain Monoamines and Behavior” and “The Generation and Characterization of Autism iPSC's”, respectively. The presentations were followed by Q&A sessions. Dr. Eggerding, on behalf of the Council, thanked Drs. DiCicco-Bloom and Millonig for their most informative

presentations reflecting accomplishments in the basic and clinical sciences research. Their presentations concluded with the promising possibilities for therapeutic interventions to improve the lives of individuals with autism.

VI. CC-MSU Update – Dr. Gerald Costa

Dr. Costa provided an update on new grantees and addressed the following questions/comments that were asked of him at the June 30, 2014 Council meeting: (1) CC-MSU's (Coordinating Center-Montclair State University) staff followed up with Mr. Weitzen's offer to attend POAC (Parents Of Autistic Children) events for the purpose of assisting the grantees with recruitment of subjects for research. Mr. Weitzen is the Executive Director of POAC. Karen Hood-Kasim, CC-MSU Coordinator, attended a POAC event and was encouraged by interest expressed by over 50 families in the NJ ACE research projects. CC-MSU is also designing a link to the CC-MSU website, modeled after an NIH website, for the purpose of assisting grantees with recruiting research subjects. (2) The CC-MSU sent a link to a research publication (a Council grantee was named as a consultant to the project) for posting on the Council's website and (3) in reference to one researcher's selection of an protocol/instrument for measuring speech Dr. Costa explained the rationale and the support provided by the CC-MSU to the grantee.

VII. Report of the Acting Executive Director (Linda Bocclair reporting for Dr. Zanna)

Website- The seven 2014 grantees and the press release announcing the \$2.5M in grant awards have been posted to the Council's website.

RFA and timeline- The FY15 RFA will be finalized by late October 2014 and the application posted on SAGE on November 5, 2014.

IACC survey- Five of the six Council members commented on adding specific IACC objectives from Questions 4 (services) and 5 (lifespan issues) to the RFA.

Discussion: Prior to discussing each objective Dr. Eggerding led a discussion of Council's intent, as agreed during the June 30, 2014 meeting, to offer pilot projects in FY15, similar to those offered during the previous two funding cycles, with minor changes. It was brought to Council's attention the difficulty in recruiting reviewers with specific expertise as the number and diversity of applications has increased during the past two funding cycles. While two of the objectives each received three votes the objectives would further increase the diversity of topics addressed by the applications and the objective relating to dentistry is most likely being addressed by researchers with expertise in dentistry. In addition, the objectives were so broad based that it is unlikely that either could be accomplished within the time frame and funding for pilot projects, as defined in the RFA.

Conclusion: Council recommended inclusion in the FY15 RFA only those objectives previously included in the RFAs with two exceptions (1) the objective regarding workshops will be removed given that it does not qualify as human research and (2) Council staff will confirm that the following objective overlaps with objectives currently included in the RFA with the understanding that research similar to that presented at this Council meeting will continue to be considered for Council funding in FY15:
“Standardize and validate model systems (e.g., cellular and/or animal) that replicate features of ASD and will allow identification of specific molecular targets or neural circuits amenable to existing or new interventions.”

VIII. Preliminary discussion of plans for FY16 funding meeting

Discussion: Members previously discussed the need for an all-day meeting to develop a plan for funding in FY16 and beyond. Council must decide by the end of 2014 on the types of grants for funding in June 2016, given the time required to develop a new grant program, announce the RFA and process applications.

Conclusion: Members preferred to meet during the week of November 17, 2014 with a final date to be set by late September 2014. Members agreed to engage the services of a facilitator to ensure that the discussion leads to the intended outcomes and that all members have the opportunity to participate in the discussions throughout the meeting.

IX. Report of Revenues and Expenditures

Mary Ray presented the FY15 Report of Revenues and Expenditures. In response to a question, she noted that \$2.5M has been placed in reserve by Treasury. Treasury did not take \$2.5M that had been placed in reserve in FY14.

X. Adjournment

Dr. Eggerding called for a motion to adjourn. MOTION by Mr. Weitzen to approve the minutes was seconded by Ms. Goldfarb. No discussion.

MOTION to adjourn was passed with all in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 8:20PM