

News from the Clinical Research Forum: January 2009

Dear Friends:

Welcome to a new year with The Clinical Research Forum. All indications point to 2009 being a challenging year for our economy, our healthcare system, our members, and our Congress. However, there is a light at the end of the tunnel: clinical and translational research is vital to the success of both our nation's economy and its healthcare.

Continuing our efforts and honing The Clinical Research Forum's advocacy message will be key to furthering our opportunities over our challenges. We hope that The Forum can not only be an effective player in each of these enterprises but also be a leader in furthering the agenda of the national clinical research enterprise.

Save the Date: April 15-17, 2009 The Forum's Annual Meeting

The Forum will hold its Annual Meeting and Awards Dinner in Washington, D.C. on April 15-17, 2009. The IT Roundtable is hosting a meeting on April 15th to provide an update on clinical research IT in this ever changing environment. Additionally, AFMR and the Forum will co-sponsor a joint session on the 15th focusing on scientific publication, grant writing and mentoring. All Forum members are invited to attend.

On April 16-17th, plans include sessions on:

- * The Forum's strategic plans for the future
- * Update from the new administration
- * Use of NIH's Clinical Center
- * Clinical research and the nation's healthcare agenda
- * The importance of innovative partnerships with disease-oriented groups
- * New IT technologies for clinical research
- * A new era in academic-industrial relations
- * Balancing conflict management and optimizing innovation

Please mark your calendar and plan to attend. An agenda and registration information will be distributed in early February.

Strategic Planning Meeting:

The Forum hosted its Strategic Planning Meeting in Washington, DC on January 13-14, 2009. Attended by about thirty-five Forum leaders and members, this meeting addressed the changing environment in which the Forum now functions and the impact these changes will have on its strategy and goals.

In the course of robust discussions, the group agreed upon the unique role and importance of the Forum's leadership during the past and especially at this point in time and recommitted to its essential purpose. The group further agreed that the administrative change in Washington presents an opportunity to focus on the importance of clinical research and to make the connection between the health of the economy and the health of the country, with clinical research being one of the key 'roads and bridges' between the two. Most attendees believed that the window of opportunity is now and that the Forum's leaders are poised to take advantage of this opportunity.

Discussions on the future of the Clinical Research Forum also led to agreement that the Forum is positioned to play a major role in influencing the development of an efficient and collaborative national clinical research enterprise that has the ability to work across the entire healthcare system. This enterprise would address such needs as removing the barriers to science-effective, cost-effective clinical research; increasing collaboration across academic medical centers and the organizations that represent clinical research; ensuring an appropriate national infrastructure for medical research and health care delivery, with a special emphasis on an integrated medical IT system; and addressing ways to enhance the training and development of clinical researchers. It is also clear that several other organizations now exist that can assist the Forum in addressing these issues in a collaborative fashion, allowing the Forum to focus its efforts more effectively on those issues where the seniority and perspective of the Forum provide the greatest leverage to these communal efforts.

The Forum's new strategic plan will be fine-tuned over the next few weeks concurrent with specific short-term actions to advance the agenda with the new administration.

A look at the New Congressional Leadership

While President Obama's election has received sweeping attention across the country, it is important to remember that there are several other new faces in the political hierarchy. For your reference, below is a look at the leadership of the 111th Congress which is made up of faces both new and familiar. If any are your representatives or of particular importance to you, please let the Forum know of your relationship.

House

Democrats

- Speaker of the House: Nancy Pelosi, California
- Majority Leader: Steny Hoyer, Maryland
- Majority Whip: James E. Clyburn, South Carolina

- Democratic Caucus Chairman: John B. Larson, Connecticut
- Democratic Caucus Vice Chairman: Xavier Becerra, California
- Assistant to the Speaker and DCCC Chairman: Chris Van Hollen, Maryland

Republicans

- Minority Leader: John Boehner, Ohio
- Minority Whip: Eric Cantor, Virginia
- Conference Chairman: Mike Pence, Indiana
- Policy Committee Chairman: Thaddeus McCotter, Michigan
- Conference Vice-Chairwoman: Cathy McMorris Rodgers, Washington
- Conference Secretary: John Carter, Texas
- NRCC Chairman: Pete Sessions, Texas

Senate

Democrats

- President Pro Tempore: Robert C. Byrd, West Virginia
- Majority Leader: Harry Reid, Nevada
- Assistant Majority Leader: Richard Durbin, Illinois
- Vice Chairman of the Conference: Charles Schumer, New York
- Secretary of the Conference: Patty Murray, Washington
- Policy Committee Chairman: Byron Dorgan, North Dakota
- Steering and Outreach Committee Chairwoman: Debbie Stabenow, Michigan
- Committee Outreach Chairman: Jeff Bingaman, New Mexico
- Rural Outreach Chairwoman: Blanche Lincoln, Arkansas
- Chief Deputy Whip: Barbara Boxer, California
- Deputy Whip: Thomas Carper, Delaware
- Deputy Whip: Bill Nelson, Florida
- Deputy Whip: Russell Feingold, Wisconsin

Republicans

- Minority Leader: Mitch McConnell, Kentucky
- Minority Whip: Jon Kyl, Arizona
- Conference Chairman: Lamar Alexander, Tennessee
- Policy Committee Chairman: John Ensign, Nevada
- Conference Vice Chairman: John Thune, South Dakota
- National Republican Senatorial Committee Chairman: John Cornyn, Texas

2009 Membership

Thank you to the many organizations who have already sent in their dues for 2009. If you don't see your organization listed, it's possible that your 2009 dues are en route or that we have not received payment. We have been told that several

memberships are still "in the works". If your organization needs an invoice, please contact us at kkearney@clinicalresearchforum.org.

The Clinical Research Forum is your voice about clinical research across the nation, on Capitol Hill, and the greater health care community. Membership in the Clinical Research Forum provides many unique benefits including participation in a marketplace of ideas with our diverse members, the IT Roundtable, the Annual Meeting and Awards Dinner.

Clinical Research Forum 2009 Membership To Date

Albert Einstein College of Medicine
The Arthritis Foundation
Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center
Brigham and Women's Hospital
Case Western Reserve
Children's Hospital of Boston
Children's Hospital of Philadelphia
Columbia University
Dana-Farber Cancer Institute
Duke University School of Medicine
Emory University School of Medicine
The Endocrine Society
Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine
Mass General Hospital
Medical College of Wisconsin
New York-Presbyterian Hospital
New York University Medical Center
Northwestern University School of Medicine
Rockefeller University
Stanford University School of Medicine
University at Buffalo
University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Medicine
University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences
University of California Los Angeles, David Geffen School of Medicine
University of California, Davis School of Medicine
University of California, San Francisco
University of Chicago
University of Florida
University of Iowa Carver College of Medicine
University of Maryland School of Medicine
University of Miami, Miller School of Medicine
University of Minnesota Academic Health Center
University of North Carolina School of Medicine
University of Pennsylvania Health System
University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine
University of Vermont College of Medicine

University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Medicine and Public Health
Weill Cornell Medical College

Health Care in the New Congress

Congressional leaders have a lot on their 2009 plate as they tackle an economic recession and a host of tabled objectives from Republicans and Democrats alike. Health care is no small player in this jumbled agenda, although it has been overshadowed by talks of tax cuts and other economic stimulus provisions.

However, both the President and Congress are looking towards health care reform as a way to not only relieve the cost squeeze for households, but also curb costs in an antiquated, cost-heavy health system. In the President's proposed \$775 billion economic stimulus plan, it is possible that more than \$100 billion will be targeted to the healthcare sector, modernizing its delivery system and providing care to the unemployed.

About \$80 billion would most likely go to state Medicaid programs which are already straining under the burden of rising unemployment. The other \$20 billion is slated to go towards updating the nation's health care delivery system -- which could include incentives or grants for digitalizing patient medical records and incenting doctors to use e-prescribing.

All in all, the health care provisions in the stimulus package may also provide a basis for enacting broader health care reforms that many lawmakers and the President have been pushing.

In addition to Medicaid and health IT spending, it is likely that lawmakers will also fund prevention programs, medical research and the construction and maintenance of community health centers. In addition, there is hope for both a step function of \$1-2B to the NIH's budget for 2009 and perhaps more in the 'out years'.

Call for News and Feedback

Got news to share with us or the membership? Questions or feedback on what the Forum can do for you? Please take the time to share any updates or questions you have with us - remember, we are here for you! Contact Cherri McGrew at cmcgrew@clinicalresearchforum.org or Kimberly Kearney at kkearney@clinicalresearchforum.org.

We look forward to hearing from you!