THE INTERSECTION OF ADVOCACY, SCIENCE POLICY, AND GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

Mary Lee Watts, MPH, RD
Director
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Overview

- AACR Science Policy and Government Affairs
  - Who are we and what do we do?

- Washington Update

- Advocacy Activities

- How can YOU get involved?
AACR’s Office of Science Policy & Government Affairs

- Serve as an authoritative voice for important science and public policy issues
- Advocate for increased funding for cancer research and biomedical science
- Formulate policy recommendations for Congress and federal agencies (NIH, FDA, CMS, PCORI)
- Inform policymakers, scientists and the public through workshops and meetings, special briefings and conferences, and advocacy publications
- Identify regulatory science and policy areas where the AACR has the potential to stimulate positive change
- Build strong, productive alliances with research advocacy and patient advocacy groups
AACR Representation on Other Policy Related Organizations and Coalitions

- National Cancer Policy Forum
- Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research (Steering Committee)
- One Voice Against Cancer (Steering Committee)
- National Coalition for Cancer Research (Board of Directors)
- Alliance for a Stronger FDA
- Personalized Medicine Coalition (PMC)
- Partnership to Improve Patient Care (PIPC)
- Research!America
- Friends of Cancer Research (Officer and Board Member)
- Turning the Tide Coalition (with PMC and Feinstein Kean Healthcare)
- Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids PARTNERS Coalition
- International Consortium for Action and Research on Tobacco
- Cancer Innovation Council
- Alliance for Childhood Cancer
Science Policy and Government Affairs Committee

George D. Demetri, MD, Chairperson

Frederick R. Appelbaum
Steven D. Averbuch
Anna D. Barker
Jose Baselga
Mary C. Beckerle
A. William Blackstock, Jr.
John F. DiPersio
Judy E. Garber
Stephan A. Grupp
Roy S. Herbst
Roy A. Jensen
Karen E. Knudsen

Michelle M. LeBeau
Patricia M. LoRusso
Frank McCormick
William G. Nelson
Gilbert S. Omenn
Steven R. Patierno
Edith A. Perez
Steven T. Rosen
Eric H. Rubin
Norman E. Sharpless
Ellen V. Sigal
Robert W. Sobol

Dan Theodorescu
Laura J. van ‘t Veer
Victor E. Velculescu
Geoffrey M. Wahl
George J. Weiner
Louis M. Weiner
Cheryl L. Willman
Douglas Yee
Robert C. Young
Michael A. Caligiuri, *ex officio*
Nancy E. Davidson, *ex officio*
Elizabeth M. Jaffee, *ex officio*
SPGA Subcommittees

- **Tobacco and Cancer**  
  Chaired by Roy S. Herbst, MD, PhD

- **Regulatory Science and Policy**  
  Chaired by Victor E. Velculescu, MD, PhD

- **Health Policy**  
  Chaired by Gilbert S. Omenn, MD, PhD
AACR Office of Science Policy and Government Affairs

Jon Retzlaff, MBA, MPA
Chief Policy Officer
Vice President, Office of Science Policy and Government Affairs

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Director, Government Relations and Advocacy

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Director, Regulatory Science and Policy

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Assistant Director, Government Relations and Advocacy

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Nicole Boschi, PhD
Senior Science Policy Analyst

Sarah Martin, MS, PhD
Senior Regulatory Science and Policy Analyst

Dash Delan
Senior Coordinator, Legislative Affairs

Serita Henderson
Senior Administrative Coordinator
Washington Today: A Challenging Environment, but Opportunities are There

- Tight budgets
- Positive Momentum for Cancer Research
- Opportunities to Take Action
Working to keep medical research a national priority

Closing the Gap

Beginning in FY 2004, if the NIH budget had merely increased at the annual rate for medical inflation, the funding level today would be approximately $42 billion instead of the current $34 billion.

By providing robust annual funding increases that exceed the medical inflation rate, Congress can close this gap.
Momentum for Medical Research Funding

- Despite more than a dozen years of flat funding, the House and Senate have shown strong bipartisan support for the National Institutes of Health over the past two years.

- In both FY 2016 and FY 2017, Congress provided a $2 billion increase for the NIH. (13% increase over two years)

- Proposed increases for the NIH in both chambers in FY 2018
  - House Appropriations Committee approved $1.1 billion increase
  - Senate Appropriations Subcommittee approved a $2 billion increase

- 21st Century Cures Act and Beau Biden Cancer Moonshot
  - Act designates $4.8 billion for targeted initiatives at the NIH in FY 2017 – 2026.
  - $1.8 billion is designated over 7 years for the Beau Biden Cancer Moonshot.
  - Established the Oncology Center of Excellence at the FDA
  - Other patient engagement directives; Office of Patient Affairs at the FDA
Current Status and Outlook

- Federal Funding:
  - Continuing Resolution enacted through December 8, 2017. NIH budget flat at FY 2017 level ($34.1 billion)
  - Bipartisan budget deal required to lift budget caps/avoid sequester

- Affordable Care Act future?

- Other issues: tax reform, immigration (DACA)
Knowledge is power!

The seventh edition was released at a Congressional briefing in Washington, DC on September 13, 2017

Report released on Capitol Hill: Sept 13, 2017
U.S. CANCER HEALTH DISPARITIES

- racial and ethnic minority groups;
- residents in certain geographic locations, including rural areas;
- refugees or asylum seekers;
- individuals of different ancestry;
- immigrants;
- individuals with disabilities;
- individuals of low socioeconomic status;
- members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community;
- adolescents and young adults; and
- the elderly.

Modified from American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) Cancer Progress Report 2017
This community-wide event, organized by the AACR, grows every year, with more than 325 organizations currently signed on as “partners.”

The 2017 Rally for Medical Research Hill Day took place on September 14, 2017.
The Road to Cancer Survivorship: Discover, Predict, Prevent, and Treat

Congressional Briefings bring scientists and patient advocates together to raise awareness on Capitol Hill and educate Members of Congress and their staff.
Progress in Immune-Oncology: Delivering Hope and Clinical Benefit to Cancer Patients
AACR-AACI-ASCO Joint Hill Days
Sharing Experiences with a Broader Audience

Scientist Survivor Program Participants Spend a Memorable Day on Capitol Hill

Posted on May 23, 2017 by AACR Science Policy and Government Affairs Office

May is National Cancer Research Month, and for the past 10 years, leaders and members from the American Association for Cancer Research (AACR), the Association of American Cancer Institutes (AACI), and the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) have converged on Capitol Hill during this month to share how cancer research is saving lives and transforming patient care.

This year, as the U.S. Senate was getting ready to vote on a government spending bill that included a $2 billion increase for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in fiscal year 2017, cancer researchers, physicians, survivors, patient advocates, and cancer center directors were making their way through the halls of Congressional office buildings to thank members for their support and urge them to keep the momentum going next year. With the White House now proposing deep cuts of nearly 22 percent to the NIH budget in fiscal year 2018, it is more important than ever that Congress continues to make medical research a national priority.

Included among those were members of the AACR Scientist Survivor Program (SSP), a program launched in 1999 to foster mutually beneficial and enduring partnerships among the leaders of the scientific and cancer survivor and
AACR-FDA Workshops (2017-2018)

- FDA-AACR Oncology Dose Finding Workshop Part III (July 20, 2017)
  - AACR Chair: Elizabeth M. Jaffee, MD
  - FDA Chair: Amy E. McKee, MD

- FDA-AACR Liquid Biopsies in Oncology Drug and Device Development Part II
  (October 10, 2017)
  - AACR Chairs: Carlos L. Arteaga, MD; Pasi A. Jänne, MD, PhD
  - FDA Chairs: Julia Beaver, MD; Gideon Blumenthal, MD; Reena Philip, PhD

- Partners in Progress: Cancer Patient Advocates and FDA Forum
  with AACR, ASCO, & ASH support (November 13, 2017)

- FDA Cardiovascular Toxicity Assessment In Oncology Trials Workshop
  with AACR, ACC, & ASCO support (December 1, 2017)

- FDA-AACR Clinical Development of Drug-Radiotherapy Combinations
  Workshop (March 2018)
Special Meeting for Advocates with the FDA
Health Policy Activities in 2017

Turning the Tide Against Cancer (T3) coalition

- Partnership between AACR, the Personalized Medicine Coalition, PhRMA, and a Feinstein-Kean Health.
- National Conference on June 30, 2017 featured patient advocates, SSP alumni Wanda Lucas and Jack Whelan
- Focused on putting the patient at the center of cancer research and care
Health Policy Activities in 2017

Affordable Care Act Session at the AACR Annual Meeting

The Potential Impact on Cancer Patients of a Repeal or Revision of the Affordable

Principles on the Affordable Care Act developed. Blog post today: http://blog.aacr.org/
On March 7, 2016, the AACR convened its first local advocacy event in partnership with Moffitt Cancer Center to discuss the impact that federal funding for the NIH and NCI has had on progress against cancer. The event featured Douglas R. Lowy, MD, acting director of the NCI, and two members of the U.S. House of Representatives, Gus Bilirakis and Kathy Castor.
The AACR Needs Your Advocacy
AACR Additional Resources

- Sign up for the AACR Cancer Policy Monitor
  - Policy newsletter distributed bi-weekly to members

- AACR ENGAGE website
  - www.aacr.org

- AACR Advocates Facebook Group
Additional Opportunities

- Get Connected with Elected Officials
  - Sign up for your Congressman’s newsletter
  - Connect with your Congressman on Facebook
  - Follow your Congressman on Twitter

- Request an in-district meeting with your Member of Congress
Cancer Research Advocacy Today: A Compelling Story to Share

- We have made significant progress
- Cancer research is saving and improving millions of lives
- We are poised to achieve tremendous breakthroughs in the coming years
- There are more than 15 million cancer survivors living in the United States today
- Tell your story – Share Your Experiences, Your Hope!!
THE SCIENTIST↔SURVIVOR PROGRAM SUPPORTERS
Thank you!

Questions?

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