



**New Jersey Department of Health  
Governor's Council for Medical Research and Treatment of Autism  
Meeting Minutes – September 9, 2013 (ratified)**

**Council Members Present**

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

Caroline Eggerding, M.D., Healthcare Organization Representative and Chairperson of the  
Governor's Council for Medical Research and Treatment of Autism

Susan P. Evans, Ed.D., Education Program Specialist for Early Intervention Program,  
Commissioner of Health and Senior Services Appointee

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

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

**Absent**

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

**NJ Department of Health (DOH) Attendees**

Martin T. Zanna M.D., MPH  
Acting Executive Director  
Governor's Council for Medical Research and Treatment of Autism

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

Dr. 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

Cheryl Nieverth

**I. Welcome** - Council Chairperson, Dr. Caroline Eggerding called the meeting to order at 6:10 PM and welcomed everyone.

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

### **III. Approval of the May 20, 2013 Council Meeting Minutes**

Dr. Eggerding called for a motion to approve the minutes. MOTION by Ms. Bell to approve the minutes was seconded by Dr. Kansagra.

Discussion: Date on page 3, third paragraph should read "...RFA released December 10, 2012...".

**MOTION to approve the minutes with one correction was passed with all in favor.**

### **V. Meeting Calendar**

Dr. Eggerding called for a motion to approve the Council's 2014 meeting calendar. She noted that Monday May 19, 2014 was added to the calendar. At that time Council will review and vote for grants to be awarded in June 2014.

MOTION by Ms. Goldfarb to approve the calendar was seconded by Ms. Bell.

**MOTION to approve the 2014 meeting calendar was passed with all in favor.**

Note: 2014 meeting dates will be posted on the Council's website: March 3, May 19, June 2, September 8 and December 1, all from 6-9PM in the auditorium, Health and Agriculture Building, 369 South Warren Street, Trenton, NJ.

## **VI. Report of the Ad hoc Committee (FY 14 funding)**

### **Pilot Projects**

Discussion: Several members completed a survey for the purpose of prioritizing IACC objectives for FY 14 funding.

Conclusion: Council will continue to fund pilot projects with a broad range of topics rather than limit the topics by prioritizing the IACC objectives.

Discussion: Categories of pilot project grants were discussed along with additional funding needed by the Coordinating Center to oversee the grants. Examples of funding for clinical, applied, health services, outcomes, translational, and basic science research (only those that would likely lead to direct clinical impact) were discussed as possible areas of funding. Specific categories of funding will be defined in the RFA with defined funding streams.

Factors for pilot study research to be included in the RFA:

- Be relevant (address an IACC objective)
- Include but not limited to translational research as a category
- Seek collaborative and/or cross-disciplinary partnerships
- Address the needs of adults with autism (a high priority area for research)

Conclusion: Motion to issue an RFA to fund pilot project research in FY14 applicable to both clinical and basic science researchers with specific categories of funding to be defined in the RFA along with defined funding streams (refer to discussion above) and fellowships to be deferred to FY 15 (refer to discussion below) was passed with all in favor.

### **Program Sites**

Discussion: With a total of \$4M available for funding in FY14, Council prefers to offer two-year pilot project grants (\$400,000/grant) providing funding for up to ten pilot project grants vs. only three pilot project grants if a five-year program site (\$2,250,000/grant) were to be offered.

Conclusion: Program Site grants will not be offered in FY14.

## **Fellowships**

Discussion: Ms. Goldfarb and Dr. Kansagra discussed their research on fellowships emphasizing the time required to further explore the types of fellowships and processes for establishing and funding them. Drs. Tanelli (Rutgers, Newark) and Rosenblatt (Children's Hospital of New Jersey/Newark Beth Israel Medical Center Foundation) will advise the ad hoc committee in the development of fellowships.

Conclusion: An RFA will be released for funding fellowships in FY15. Progress toward establishing fellowships will be an agenda item at each of Council's meetings to ensure completion of an RFA for funding in June 2015.

## **VII. April 2014 Meeting of Grantees**

Discussion: Options for meeting locations, target audience, objectives and topics were discussed.

Conclusions: The meeting will be held at Montclair in April 2014. The overarching goal is to spur collaborations with the intent of encouraging basic science and clinical researchers to talk to one another to discuss opportunities in clinical translational research, an area that the Council will increasingly focus on for funding in FY15 and beyond. All past and present Council funded grantees will be invited to attend. A dinner meeting with a subgroup of the participants will be held to discuss the organization of a fellowship program. Madeleine Goldfarb will chair the planning committee with members Liz Bell and Kathy Mulhooney. Researchers will be recruited to serve on the committee. It was recommended that the meeting is a good opportunity to solicit from the participants ideas/preferences for the 2015 statewide summit to be offered by the NJ ACE Coordinating Center.

## **VIII. Report of the Acting Executive Director, Martin T. Zanna, M.D. MPH**

### **Administrative Issues and Website**

**Council staff offices** moved on September 5 to 225 E. State Street, Trenton. The phone and fax numbers have not changed and mail will continue to be received at P.O. 360. Council meetings will continue to be held at 369 South Warren Street, Trenton.

**Website-** the new grantees, links to their websites and related press releases have been added to the website.

**Update on Council membership.** Appointments to the Council are a high priority for the Governor's office. While it was anticipated that the appointments would have been made by July the resignation of Matt Cortland delayed the process due to the need to review applicants for the public member seat.

### **Report on RFA and Timeline**

The RFA process will begin now that the Council voted on the categories of grants to be offered for the FY14 grant cycle. The RFA will be posted during the first week of December at the latest with applications due in late March. Council will vote on May 19, 2014 for awards to be announced in late June 2014.

### **Report on Basic and Clinical Science Research Grantees**

Eight of the eleven grantees had been granted no cost extensions through June 2013. Final reports for the eight grantees were due by August 30, 2013. Four of the eight reports have been received and Council staff will follow-up with the remaining grantees. Of the remaining three grantees, one grant was completed and two others granted no cost extensions (one through December 2013 and the other through June 2014).

### **Report on NJ ACE Grantees**

The three grantees with conditional awards have submitted the required documentation as specified in their Notices of Grant Awards. The documentation is being reviewed by the Coordinating Center Team and Council staff. Dr. Costa has contacted all the new grantees and is planning visits and a group meeting in November.

### **Autism New Jersey Annual Conference Poster Session**

The Council has once again been invited to participate in Autism New Jersey's poster session at their Annual Conference to be held October 17-18 in Atlantic City. Dr. Costa will represent the NJ ACE with a display table at the conference

### **March 2012 Proceedings of the Meeting of Clinical and Basic Science Researchers**

The document is being reviewed by the DOH Director of Policy and we anticipate it will be available very soon.

### **IX. Report of Revenue and Expenditures**

Ms. Ray presented the Revenue and Expenditures Report (July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012). There were no comments or questions.

Note: Funding was appropriated from the Autism Medical Research and Treatment Fund for the Autism New Jersey Helpline (\$250,000) and is not included in the current Report of revenue and Expenditures.

### **X. Public Comments**

Dr. Audrey Mars commented in support of fellowships and provided ideas for consideration.

Ms. Cheryl Neiverth commented about materials she had submitted to Council regarding an ethics complaint and requested feedback. Dr. Eggerding stated that the materials had been submitted to the DOH.

**XI. Adjournment**

Dr. Eggerding called for a motion to adjourn. MOTION by Dr. Evans to adjourn was seconded by Ms. Goldfarb.

MOTION passed with all in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM.