



Accelerating the Pace from Discovery to Clinical Practice

We are truly at a crossroads in medicine. The scientific advances of the past few years, particularly the completion of the Human Genome Project, dictate that we act now to encourage fundamental changes in how we carry out clinical research, and how we train the new generations of clinician scientists. As the nation's medical research agency, the NIH is taking a leadership role to ensure that the public's health is well served by these advances.

Two years ago, NIH Director Dr. Elias Zerhouni announced the NIH Roadmap for Medical Research—a set of strategic initiatives to accelerate the pace of medical discovery across all areas of science. One of the key areas of the Roadmap is the collective effort to re-engineer the clinical research enterprise. Based on input from the biomedical research community, we learned that a new way of doing clinical research and translational science is needed if we are to deliver new discoveries to patients.

With your help, we shaped the Clinical and Translational Science Awards (CTSAs) Program, which was announced last fall. We believe that CTSAs will give academic health centers and other research institutions more freedom to foster productive collaboration among experts in different fields, lower barriers among disciplines, and encourage creative approaches that will help us solve complex medical problems.

Our vision is to transform the nation's clinical research enterprise by achieving three main goals:

- *Innovative Research Programs*: To support the development of an academic home for innovative clinical and translational research programs at institutions nationwide, thereby providing integrated intellectual and physical resources that are more flexible and responsive to modern research needs.
- *Highly Trained Researchers*: To train a robust cadre of interdisciplinary researchers who have well-structured and well-recognized career pathways, and are well positioned to make the next breakthroughs in medical science.
- *Improved Patient Care*: All of this serves our ultimate goal—to improve health outcomes for patients with rare and common diseases by fostering collaborative relationships throughout communities and enhancing public trust in clinical and translational research.

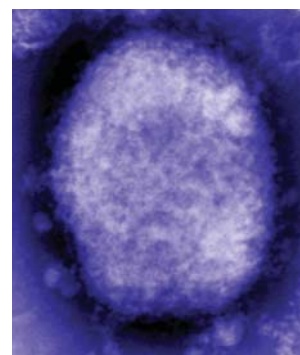
The changes we have described will take place over a period of years; during this time we will work closely with our NIH colleagues and with the academic health centers, research institutions, and the public throughout the nation.

Barbara Alving, M.D.
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