

DEAN'S CORNER E-NEWSLETTER

Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine

February 1, 2008

After a six month hiatus, the TCOM Dean's Corner e-Newsletter has returned by popular demand! Faculty, staff and students have all asked for continuation of this all inclusive newsletter that can keep you up-to-date with the entire mission-specific activities of your Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine and our Health Science Center community.

First of all, I wish you and yours a happy and healthy new year. For starters, 2008 has started off very busy. I just returned from the AOA's 18th Annual Medical Education Leadership Conference where I served as the Co-Chair of the program. Additionally, Drs. Dubin, Peska, Liccardone, and Yurvati led various sessions on the program. I am proud to highlight the leadership role that TCOM holds for the profession.

Additionally, TCOM hosted the annual meeting of the Council of Osteopathic Student Government Presidents (COSGP) on our campus January 17th through the 20th. The program included presentations on student involvement in research, a community service event at Tarrant County Food Bank as well as the standard committee and board meetings. But I am sure the highpoint for the student leaders from across the nation was their trip to the Historic Fort Worth Stock Yard district and Rodeo Friday evening.

Please supply any pertinent information to my office (deantcom@hsc.unt.edu) for inclusion in future newsletters.

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Student Affairs

Thomas Moorman, EdD
Associate Vice President for Student Affairs

Class of 2008 Commencement is Around the Corner

Mark your calendars now!

TCOM Class of 2008 Commencement
Saturday, May 17
Fort Worth Convention Center
Rehearsal: 9:00 am
Deadline to lineup for procession: 1:15 pm
Event starts promptly at 2:00 pm

DO Class of 2008 Senior Awards Banquet
May 14, 2008, Wednesday

PA Class of 2008 Banquet
May 15, 2008, Thursday

Look for more details by early March.

Career Services Events

The Career Services Office, in conjunction with SOMA (Student Osteopathic Medical Association), will sponsor the annual Internship and Residency Fair on February 22, 2008. Last year more than 105 representatives from 36 different programs participated. Third-year students will also participate in Residency 101, which is an overview of the residency process.

In February, the Career Services Office will begin offering Interview Stream, a webcam-recorded video interview service that allows students the ability to practice interviewing skills. Interviews can then be sent to the Career Services Office for feedback. This service will help medical students refine their skills when preparing for residency interviews as well as enhance their overall communication abilities.

Academic Support: Top 3 Tips for Winter 2008

1. Break your reading into manageable one hour chunks. If you generally comprehend 10 pages of text in an hour, then plan two hours for 20 pages.
2. Use a Loop or Cycle when studying. Review today's lectures/DSAs. Skim and develop questions about tomorrow's material. Read tomorrow's material for comprehension as well as to answer your own questions. Practice questions using your resources. Review all day for long-term learning.
3. Use your learning style. Only your style will work for you. Your friend's style may be different, so don't use what works for someone else when it is not compatible

with your style. If you aren't sure of your style, go to the VARK website and find out: <http://www.vark-learn.com/english/page.asp?p=questionnaire>

Meanwhile, if you are having any trouble with any of these tips, make an appointment at 817-735-2505 to see Dr. Cody Arvidson or Ms. Chiana Diggs.

New Founders Activity Center (FAC) Policy

EFFECTIVE January 23, 2008

All UNTHSC employees, students & FAC members must present their ID badges when using the FAC for building entrance and to track utilization. ID badges must be scanned at the front desk upon entrance to the FAC (for utilization purposes).

Further, ID badges must be used to get into the building during the following hours:

Monday thru Thursday: 6:00 – 8:00 am and 5:00 – 10:00 pm

Friday : 6:00 – 8:00 am and 5:00 – 9:00 pm

Saturday: 10:00 am – 3:00 pm

Sunday: Noon – 5:00 pm

The FAC is open to visitors Monday through Friday 8:00 am – 5:00 pm or by appointment.

If you do not have your ID badge with you, you will not be able to use the FAC.

If you have lost or misplaced your ID badge, you will need to contact campus police, or the Biomedical Communications Department, for a new or replacement ID badge.

This new policy was developed to increase the safety for all FAC members and staff. Thank you for your patience and cooperation as we institute this new policy.

For questions, please contact Susie Quintana, Health Promotion Manager at 817-735-2069 or squintan@hsc.unt.edu.

New and Improved Financial Aid Website More of the Information You Need to Know!

The Financial Aid Office added several new sections to their website as a direct result of their ongoing efforts to improve communication with students. The new sections are:

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Have questions about the financial aid process, you don't have to wait for our office to open . . . check out the FAQ section.

Financial Aid Acronyms

Not sure what FAFSA stands for? We have added a list of important acronyms along with definitions that should help you navigate the complexities of financial aid.

Consolidation Facts

Many students hear about debt consolidation. But, do you know the pros and cons or which loans you are eligible? You will now! Check out our new page on consolidation.

Financial Aid Cent\$

We know our students are busy, so we want to make financial aid information as accessible as possible. Each month we will highlight a new important topic. Every addition will also be archived in case you miss one.

External Scholarship Links

We have now made searching for scholarships easier than ever by linking a host of new scholarship search engines to our website. These will assist all our students searching for scholarship opportunities.

And, don't forget: the financial aid website has other great resources too, such as: loan calculators, Cost of Attendance budgets, current scholarship opportunities, and much more. Please contact our office if you have any questions or comments.

Phone: 817-735-2505

E-mail: finaid@hsc.unt.edu

In person: EAD-247

Holiday Casino Night-Wrap Up

Holiday Casino Night 2007 was a huge success! The Student Life staff organized the event for all UNTHSC faculty, staff, and students. With 243 people in attendance, the Stampede Room at the Stockyards was packed with everyone jockeying for a place at the blackjack and roulette tables. For those who love to sing, karaoke was provided through our UNTHSC CETS department. Everyone enjoyed the music, dancing, and some even took their turn at the Wii. Pictures to mark the occasion were taken by campus photographer, Tommy Hawkes.

At the end of the night, participants cashed in their winnings for raffle tickets. Some of the prizes that were up for grabs included gift certificates to various restaurants including Macaroni Grill, artwork by a local artist, gift baskets, and even a GPS system.

Student Counseling and Help for Depression

Recently, the UNT Health Science Center student body participated in a GoalQuest survey related to student mental health and depression. Over 25 percent of the students enrolled at the Health Science Center responded. The survey data indicates that over 40 percent of our students are experiencing

moderate to severe depression, 19 percent have been diagnosed with clinical depression at one time, and that 5 percent are currently in treatment. It may surprise you to know that these numbers are a little below the means of the national sample that participated in this survey. However, there is no doubt that depression is an issue that we must address as a campus.

If you are feeling alone, unmotivated, and constantly tired, you may be represented by one of these statistics. Please know that you are not alone and that there are resources to help you move through these issues to achieve a healthy mind, body, and spirit.

First, you should reach out to your friends, family, a doctor, faculty member, or a staff person here at UNTHSC. The Division of Student Affairs' doors are always open to you. We do provide more than just financial aid counseling.

Second, the Student EAP program offers free and anonymous counseling to UNTHSC students. You can call and speak to someone 24/7.

Student EAP (817) 339-8936.

Clinical Affairs/Faculty Practice

Robert Adams, DO

Senior Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs/Chief Medical Officer

Educational Programs

Don Peska, DO

Associate Dean for Educational Programs

The Careers in Medicine is now well into its second year. Our program assists TCOM medical and PA students with their career needs at each stage of their academic development. During year one, medical students are encouraged to think about their individual personalities -- what makes them unique -- and what specialties might best suit their individual needs. During year two, students meet with advisors in small groups for lunch to discuss their career choices, as well as answer questions pertaining to specialty selection. During year three, class meetings are held during the fall to present "Residency 100" which includes how to make informed decisions and an understanding of the minimum credentials needed to be competitive for the various residency programs. During the spring of year three, "Residency 101" provides an opportunity to fine tune an understanding of how to write a CV and personal statement, the ERAS application process, and what to expect during residency interviews. During year four, one-on-one assistance is available to students as they apply to residency programs and anxiously await the results of the Match, which determines which program they have been accepted to. The CiM PA program is similarly structured to suit their three-year curriculum.

At any stage during their four-year curriculum, students may contact the Office of Educational Programs to schedule an appointment for personal career counseling.

Additionally, we are fortunate to have an outstanding group of physician specialty advisors who meet with our students to discuss what it's really like to work in a particular specialty, and guide them through their chosen medical career path.

The program assists our students with their comprehensive career development needs, and it has been well received. For more information about the CiM program, please visit us on the web at: <http://www.hsc.unt.edu/education/cim/>.

Eryn Loney, M.L.A.
Director of Program Development
Careers in Medicine Leader

Academic Affairs

Bruce Dubin, DO, JD
Associate Dean for Academic Affairs

There is a lot of excitement about two of the new courses for first and second year TCOM students. For our first year medical students, the Medical Informatics course has introduced student led "Grand Rounds" as an important part of that curricular structure. Students have already received basic training in medical informatics and medical journal search techniques during the first semester, thanks to the hard work of Dan Burgard and our Library Staff. In the second phase of this course, a group of ten students receive a case from the New England Journal of Medicine, every two weeks. They research the topic and deliver a grand rounds presentation. These have been excellent. Come join the first year class and the faculty group of moderators to hear this wonderful presentation. Dates and times can be located on the TCOM Year I courses web site.

Another new exciting course is our "honors elective program", beginning this semester. Students who currently rank in the top 25 percent of their class have received an invitation to participate in an honors elective course. These courses are a chance to explore new and exciting areas of interest. Some of our courses include: Medical Anthropology, Advanced Medical Jurisprudence, Advanced Anatomy, and Medical History. We are piloting these honors elective programs this year, and hope to further expand this next year.

PA Studies

Hank Lemke, PA
Chair of PA Studies

Program News

Many events have occurred in the Physician Assistant Studies program since the last **Dean's E-Newsletter** was published. Perhaps the most important of these has been the successful reaccreditation of the PA Program by the Accreditation

Review Commission for PA Education (ARC-PA). We have been reaccredited for seven years, which is the maximum number of years that can be awarded by the ARC-PA. We are among the 12 percent of PA programs in the country that have received maximum-length accreditation in the past 5 years.

On the downside, two faculty have left the PA Program for new positions and opportunities. PA Jim Roch left the program last October after working here just over 5 years. Jim moved to sunny Arizona, where he will continue to teach PA students at a new PA program near Tuscon. Dr. Linda Reed has also moved after accepting a new position as the Dean of Allied Health at the Baptist College of Health Sciences in Memphis, Tennessee. While she regrets leaving friends and colleagues here in Fort Worth, she also describes her new position as, “. . . a wonderful opportunity and a perfect ‘fit’ for me.” Both faculty members are wished well in their new adventures.

On January 2, 2008, Kirk Barron, PhD, PA-C joined the faculty of PA Studies after a brief break from PA education to work in cardiology. Dr. Barron is a native of Fort Worth, holds a Doctorate in Pharmacology from the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio and a degree in physician assistant studies from the Oklahoma University Health Science Center in Oklahoma City. On a national front, Mr. Hank Lemke, PA-C, chairman of the Department of PA Studies was appointed as a Commissioner for the ARC-PA (effective January 1, 2008) for three years.

PA Applicant News

Enrollment in the PA Class of 2011 continues at a rapid pace. Over 800 persons have applied for acceptance this year, and nearly 150 interviews are expected to be completed by the end of January. As is customary for the program admissions, offers of acceptance will continue to be made until the class reaches capacity at 35 students, an event that is expected by March 2008.

2007 NCCPA Exam Results

The national Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants has announced that the first-time pass rate for UNTHSC PA graduates for the Class of 2007 was 96 percent, exceeding our overall 5-year average of 93 percent. Congratulations graduates!

PA Program Faculty Search

The Department of PA Studies continues its search and recruiting efforts for PA faculty members. PA faculty must hold NCCPA National Certification and Texas PA Licensure. We are also exploring partnering with UNT Health and TCOM clinical departments in order to permit PA faculty to maintain their clinical skills for much of the week while providing teaching support to the PA program.

Content Advisors Needed

We are looking for physician and scientist faculty members interested in serving as “Content Advisors” and guiding PA students on their master’s projects. All students in the PA program are required to complete a project during their first 19 months of study at UNTHSC. The goals include encouraging students to develop solid research and critical-thinking habits. The students’ projects range from

literature reviews to small data collection. Perhaps you have an ongoing research project that could be tied to our students' interests and goals. Interested faculty members are encouraged to call Dr. Olive Chen at 817-735-0203.

Clinical Research

John Licciardone, DO, MS, MBA
Acting Associate Dean for Clinical Research

Research Appreciation Day

Research Appreciation Day at the University of North Texas Health Science Center will be on Friday, March 28, 2008. Please encourage your students, residents, faculty, and staff to participate in the day's events. The Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine is particularly encouraging the submission and presentation of abstracts and posters. More details, including the electronic abstract and poster submission system, will soon be available on the UNTHSC Intranet.

Distinguished Speaker Series

The next presentation will be on Monday, March 31, 2008 at 5:15 pm in Luibel Hall. The presentation involving the focus area of Musculoskeletal Medicine will be given by Christine Choate, D.C., Ph.D., who is Executive Director for Research at the Palmer College of Chiropractic. She was formerly a program officer at the National Institutes of Health - National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine. Please encourage your students, residents, faculty, and staff to attend.

International Interdisciplinary Symposium Hosted by The Osteopathic Research Center

Delineating the Evidence Base for Somato-Visceral Interactions and Autonomic Mechanisms of Manual Therapy will be held March 31, 2008 through April 1, 2008. This symposium is part of the Osteopathic Collaborative Clinical Trials Initiatives Conference (OCCTIC) series. This is a groundbreaking international, interdisciplinary symposium that features leading researchers in the areas of somato-visceral reflexes and autonomic mechanisms of manual therapy from the United States, Sweden, Germany, and Canada. Early registration discount ends February 29, 2008. After March 15, only a limited number of slots will be available.

Admissions

Russell Gamber, DO, MPH
Assistant Dean of TCOM Admissions & Outreach

TMDSAS Modified Rolling Admissions Program

Since the Texas Medical and Dental Schools Application Service began operation in 1968, all Texas-resident applicants have been notified of their acceptance into member schools on the same day each year – February 1. This year marks the second year in which a “modified rolling admissions” policy will be utilized. There has been an “early match” period from November 15 through December 31, and a second and final match will occur on February 1, 2008. During the early match

period this year TCOM sent a number of offers to Texas residents. Under the new policy, applicants can hold multiple offers from any school that interviewed them. We are excited by the opportunity to make early offers to exceptionally well qualified applicants, realizing that many of them will receive offers from other medical schools. These applicants must choose which school they wish to attend and decline all other offers by January 15. Applicants can use the time between their early offers and January 15 to do further research on medical schools or make "second-look" visits to campuses.

Update on Admissions Statistics: TCOM received 1,978 applications (1,845 Texas residents, 133 non-residents) for the entering class of 2008, compared to the 1,960 applications received for the entering class of 2007. It is gratifying to note that once again, the TCOM applicant pool rose this year, particularly in a year in which the overall pool of applicants to Texas medical schools dropped for the first time in recent history. A total of 615 TCOM applicants were interviewed between late July and mid-December, 2007. The medical school plans to accept 175 applicants into the entering class of 2008.

Interviews for the physician assistant graduate program started in September 2007, and will conclude with the final interviews in February 2008. The PA program received 844 applications for the EC (entering class) of 2008, a 17 percent rise over the last year. A total of 140 applicants will be interviewed to seat a class of 35.

The JAMP Match Results

During the fall 2007 interview season, 58 Joint Admission Medical Program (JAMP) students, who attend universities across the state, interviewed at TCOM for the entering class of 2008. JAMP was created by the 77th Texas State Legislature to provide support and encouragement to economically disadvantaged students who want to pursue a medical education. Every year, undergraduate students are selected statewide to participate in JAMP. If selected, they will participate in summer internships at all eight Texas medical schools, including TCOM, to prepare them for success in medical school. Those students who successfully meet the stringent requirements of the program will be assured a seat in one of the eight Texas medical schools.

This year the JAMP Council decided that 42 senior JAMP students had met all cognitive and non-cognitive requirements and would be matched to one of the eight Texas medical schools. TCOM was scheduled to match five students. On December 15, 2007 (JAMP Match Day), TCOM matched the following students:

Bessy Eapen: University of Texas - Dallas
(Bessy attended TCOM's 2006 summer program)
Ugo Eziefule: Texas State University
Xuan Thao Nghe: Texas Woman's University
(Xuan Thau attended TCOM's 2006 summer program)
Christian Reyna: University of Texas - Pan American
Yvette Valerio: Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi

Thanks and Appreciation: Based upon written and oral feedback from our applicants, we realize that the interview day is one of the most critical events in the recruitment process. Every person an applicant encounters during his or her day on campus – faculty interviewers, students, and staff – is crucial in that person’s decision-making process. We would like to express our sincere thanks to the department chairs, faculty members, and interview coordinators for their support and assistance during the interviewing season. A record number of interviews was completed this year, thanks to the cooperation of all persons involved.

Other News

Science and Health News

Risk of Hepatotoxicity is higher with acetaminophen, compared with NSAIDs or Coxibs

January 15, 2008

By Damian McNamara

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (EGMN) - Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs impart an only slightly elevated risk of serious hepatic events, compared with nonhepatotoxic lorazepam, and the risk for both is considerably less than for acetaminophen, according to a large comparison study presented at the World Congress on Osteoarthritis.

“Serious hepatic events are a rare consequence of exposure to NSAIDs,” Dr. Benoit Panzini said. However, recent reports of hepatotoxicity for some specific NSAIDs might suggest that the true incidence is underreported, he added. In an effort to remedy the paucity of clinical data, Dr. Panzini and his associates conducted a study.

“This study shows that, in a relevant population, traditional NSAIDs and coxibs are not significantly associated with hospitalizations for serious hepatotoxicity. The study also confirms that prescribed acetaminophen is significantly associated with hepatotoxicity,” said Dr. Panzini, a gastroenterologist at the Notre Dame Hospital of the University of Montreal. “We believe that the risk of serious hepatotoxicity should be taken into account when making therapeutic decisions.”

The investigators retrospectively assessed the records for 515,637 patients prescribed an NSAID, acetaminophen, lorazepam, or none of these medications (a control group) over a 2-year period. The mean age was 60 years, and 63 percent of the cohort was female. The records came from a public health insurance administrative database called the Regie de l’assurance maladie du Quebec, which has records of those who accessed the public health care system in the province.

The researchers identified 629 relevant hospitalizations in this cohort using the ICD-9 codes for conditions including jaundice, liver disorders, hepatitis, and necrosis of the liver; certain specific hepatic disorders not due to drugs were excluded. Each case was age- and sex-matched with four controls. The study was funded by Novartis Pharmaceuticals Canada Inc. The database included patients who met the study criteria from 1990 to 2000, and the study period was January 1999 to December 2000.

The data included a random sample of 25 percent of all prescriptions written by primary care physicians and 100 percent of those written by rheumatologists. Overall, patients who had seen a rheumatologist in the year prior to receiving any prescription had a higher risk of an adverse hepatic event (odds ratio 1.3), compared with patients who had seen a primary care physician but not a rheumatologist before receiving a prescription (OR 1.1) and with the control group (OR 1.0). "So rheumatologists are hepatotoxic too," Dr. Panzini quipped.

Multiple hospitalizations were also associated with increased risk of adverse hepatic events (OR 2.2), "which probably addresses comorbidity," Dr. Panzini said during a late-breaking presentation at the meeting, which was sponsored by the Osteoarthritis Research Society International.

Incidence rates per 100,000 person-years were calculated based on the duration of exposure and the number of serious hepatic events. Compared with an incidence of 53.8/100,000 person-years among controls, the incidence of adverse hepatic events was 75.1/100,000 person-years for lorazepam, 78.1/100,000 person-years in the NSAID group, and 101.7/100,000 person-years in the patients prescribed acetaminophen (with or without codeine).

Unadjusted risk figures showed a high relative risk for acetaminophen, an intermediate significant risk for NSAIDs, and a moderate, nonsignificant risk for lorazepam. When risk values were adjusted for medical resource use, lorazepam's risk became identical to nonexposed control patients. At the same time, acetaminophen risk remained significant and NSAID risk became nonsignificant.

With the control group as a reference and adjusting for potential confounders, the relative risk of hospitalization for a serious hepatic event was 1.0 for lorazepam, 1.1 for an NSAID, and 1.7 for acetaminophen. These data suggest NSAIDs have a minimal, nonsignificant risk and acetaminophen has a substantial, significant for causing a serious hepatic event, Dr. Panzini said.

"In this patient population, serious hepatic events were not uncommon," Dr. Panzini said. "Nonselective NSAIDs, coxibs, and lorazepam were not associated with a substantial increase in risk for these events. Our study shows that traditional NSAIDs and coxibs are less hepatotoxic than prescribed acetaminophen. When making therapeutic decisions, the lower risk of hepatotoxicity should be weighed against the potentially higher risk of gastrointestinal side effects."

January 10, 2008

ST LOUIS (MD Consult) - Repolarization abnormalities detected on screening electrocardiograms (ECGs) in young, trained athletes may be associated with later manifestations of cardiomyopathy, according to a study in the January 10 issue of The New England Journal of Medicine.

The analysis included a database of ECGs in 12,550 trained athletes in Italy, where cardiovascular screening is required for all participants in officially sanctioned competitive sports. The database included 81 athletes who had marked repolarization abnormalities, with diffusely distributed and deeply inverted T waves: 2 mm or greater in at least three leads. None had any evidence of structural heart disease.

The 81 athletes were followed up for a mean of 9 years, including serial clinical, ECG, and echocardiographic studies. Outcomes, especially the development of cardiomyopathies, were compared with those in 229 control athletes with normal ECGs. The lead author was Dr Antonio Pelliccia of the Italian National Olympic Committee, Rome.

Further evidence of cardiomyopathies emerged in 5 of the 81 athletes with abnormal ECGs. These included one sudden death from arrhythmia related to clinically undetected right ventricular cardiomyopathy.

Three of the 80 survivors went on to develop features of hypertrophic cardiomyopathy. This occurred at a mean follow-up of 12 years, at age 27 to 50 years. One of these three patients experienced an aborted cardiac arrest.

Dilated cardiomyopathy developed at 9 years' follow-up in a fifth athlete with an abnormal ECG. There were no cardiac events and no cases of cardiomyopathy at 9 years' follow-up in control athletes with normal ECGs.

Repolarization abnormalities and other signs of left ventricular hypertrophy may be detected by ECG in young, trained athletes. In most cases, these are harmless effects of athletic training. However, some marked ECG abnormalities-including diffuse and deeply inverted T waves-may be signs of underlying cardiac disease in athletes with no apparent structural heart disease.

The new results suggest that, in some minority of cases, these markedly abnormal ECG findings in young, trained athletes may be the first sign of underlying cardiomyopathy. Serious adverse outcomes may not develop until many years later. "These observations underscore the importance of greater diagnostic scrutiny and continued clinical surveillance of trained athletes who present with such distinctly abnormal ECGs," the investigators conclude.

N Engl J Med. 2008; 358:152-161.

Health Policy News

President Signs FY 2008 Funding Package

President Bush Dec. 26 signed the omnibus "Consolidated Appropriations Act for FY 2008" (H.R. 2764), the \$555 billion spending package approved by Congress Dec. 19. When combined with the previously-passed Defense spending bill the omnibus meets the President's overall discretionary spending limit of \$932.8 billion.

Department of Education Appoints COSFA Chair to Rulemaking Committee

The Department of Education Dec. 31 named Carrie Steere-Salazar to represent the AAMC and graduate/professional schools on the Department's upcoming negotiated rulemaking committee on student loans. Ms. Steere-Salazar is chair of the AAMC Committee on Student Financial Assistance (COSFA) and director of Student Financial Services at the University of California, San Francisco, School of Medicine.

President Bush Signs CHIMP Act Alteration

President Bush Dec. 26 signed the "Chimp Haven is Home Act" (S. 1916), which prohibits removal of chimpanzees from a federal sanctuary for chimps retired from research. S. 1916, introduced Aug. 1 by Sen. Richard Burr (R-N.C.), deletes the provision in the CHIMP Act that allowed chimps to be removed from the sanctuary for research. The bill still allows the use of sanctuary chimps in noninvasive behavioral studies and medical studies that use information collected during the course of normal veterinary care within the sanctuary.

Dept. of Commerce Committee Finds "Deemed Export" Rules are Obsolete

The Deemed Export Advisory Committee (DEAC) to the U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC) Dec. 20 released its final report, recommending revised deemed export regulations that more selectively build higher "walls" around specific technologies and allow for more latitude and flexibility in industry and university controls. The DEAC has determined that the current regulatory regime for deemed exports does not effectively protect national security, and in fact may hinder U.S. industry and universities as they seek to collaborate or compete with their increasingly sophisticated international counterparts.

On The Hill...

Rep. Roger Wicker (R-Miss.) was appointed by Mississippi Governor Haley Barbour (R) Dec. 31 to fill the Senate seat vacated by former Sen. Trent Lott (R). Gov. Barbour will call a special election within 60 days to fill Rep. Wicker's House seat. Rep. John Peterson (R-Pa.) Jan. 3 announced that he is

retiring from Congress for health reasons. No other candidates have filed for the seat with the Federal Elections Commission, though the state filing deadline is not until Feb. 12.

MedPAC Recommends IME Payment Cut

MedPAC met Jan. 10-11, and reiterated its recommendation to reduce the Indirect Medical Education add-on payment by 1 percentage point to 4.5 percent from its current 5.5 percent. MedPAC also recommended that Congress increase payment rates for acute inpatient and outpatient prospective payment systems in fiscal year 2009 by the full hospital market basket index, and recommended a 1.1 percent update to physician services for 2009.

The Year Ahead

Lawmakers return to Washington this month to begin the second session of the 110th Congress. The House returns Jan. 15, while the Senate convenes a week later on Jan. 22. The President delivers his final State of the Union address on Jan. 28, where he will set the stage for his proposed FY 2009 Federal Budget. For the first time, the White House will release on Feb. 4 what it describes as a paperless copy of the budget document.

On the Hill

Rep. Tom Lantos (D-Calif.) announced Jan. 2 that he will not seek reelection, after announcing he has been diagnosed with esophageal cancer. Rep. John Doolittle (R-Calif.) announced Jan. 10 that he will retire at the end of the 110th Congress.

HHS IG Issues Report on Management of Emergencies at Specialty Hospitals

The Inspector General for the Department of Health and Human Services released a January 2008 report about the ability of physician-owned specialty hospitals to manage medical emergencies. According to the IG report, two-thirds of physician-owned specialty hospitals use "911" as part of their emergency response. The report was requested by Senate Finance Committee Chair Max Baucus (D-Mont.) and Ranking Member Charles Grassley (R-Iowa).

NIH Issues Revised Policy Statement on Public Access

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Jan. 11 issued a revised policy statement reflecting that compliance with the agency's "public access" rules is now required by statute, specifically the recent "Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2008." The legislation requires that all investigators funded by NIH ensure that an electronic version of their final, peer-reviewed manuscripts accepted for publication is submitted to the National Library of

Medicine within 12 months of the official date of publication.

Latest "Science Indicators" Detect Declining Federal Support for Academic R&D

The U.S. National Science Board Jan. 15 released its Science and Engineering Indicators 2008, the latest in a series of biennial reports analyzing funding and other trends in U.S. research and development (R&D). The two volume compendium provides comprehensive data on all aspects of national science policy, from K-12 math and science education to U.S. global competitiveness. Press coverage largely focused on the report's evidence for eroding dominance of U.S. science relative to other nations, and on mixed findings relating to the public's understanding of fundamental scientific concepts and facts.

IRS Working on Instructions for Schedule H

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Dec. 20 released draft revisions to Form 990 and the accompanying schedules, including Schedule H that is to be completed by hospitals. The IRS is working with the AAMC and other hospital associations on draft instructions for Schedule H. The Service is pursuing an aggressive time table and hopes to make the instructions available for public comment in late February. Instructions for Form 990 are being developed separately, with a goal of finalizing them in the summer.

Research and Funding Opportunities

NIH Funding Opportunities and Notices

Modified Application Submission, Referral and Review for Appointed NIH Study Section Members
(NOT-OD-08-026)
National Institutes of Health
<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-08-026.html>

NIH Policy on Late Submission of Grant Applications
(NOT-OD-08-027)
National Institutes of Health
<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-08-027.html>

Revised PHS 398 (DHHS Public Health Service Grant Application) Now Available
(NOT-OD-08-028)
National Institutes of Health
<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-08-028.html>

Revised PHS 2271, PHS 3734, and HHS 568 Forms Now Available
(NOT-OD-08-029)
National Institutes of Health
<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-08-029.html>

Revised PHS 2590 (DHHS Public Health Service Noncompeting Continuation Progress Report) Now Available
(NOT-OD-08-030)

National Institutes of Health

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-08-030.html>

Appendices to Paper PHS 398 (DHHS Public Health Service Grant Application) to be Submitted on CD
(NOT-OD-08-031)

National Institutes of Health

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-08-031.html>

Change of Biomedical Information Science and Technology Initiative (BISTI) FOAs to Regular Program Announcements (PA)
(NOT-GM-08-117)

National Institute of General Medical Sciences

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-GM-08-117.html>

Requests for Applications

Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) for Drug Abuse in General Medical Settings (R01)

(RFA-DA-08-021)

National Institute on Drug Abuse

Application Receipt Date(s): March 14, 2008

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/rfa-files/RFA-DA-08-021.html>

Development and Application of New Technologies to Targeted Genome-wide Resequencing in Well-Phenotyped Populations (R01)

(RFA-HL-08-004)

National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute

National Human Genome Research Institute

Application Receipt Date(s): February 28, 2008

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/rfa-files/RFA-HL-08-004.html>

Program Announcements

(none)

NIH Funding Opportunities now available in RSS (Really Simple News Syndication) format - see http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/rss_info.htm for details.

This weekly list can be found at:

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/WeeklyIndex.cfm?WeekEnding=01-04-2008>

Extension of the Midcareer Investigator Award in Patient-Oriented Research (K24)
(PA-04-107)

(NOT-OD-08-034)

National Institutes of Health

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-08-034.html>

Salary Limitation on Grants, Cooperative Agreements, and Contracts
(NOT-OD-08-035)

National Institutes of Health

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-08-035.html>

Public Briefing: RFA-AI-08-002 Regional Centers of Excellence for Biodefense and Emerging Infectious Diseases Research (RCE) Program
(NOT-AI-08-033)

National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-AI-08-033.html>

Request for Information (RFI): Notice of Request for Information on Cancer and Normal Tissue Acquisition and Processing Variables
(NOT-CA-08-002)

National Cancer Institute

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-CA-08-002.html>

Administrative Supplements for Dissemination of Cancer-related Surveillance Research
(NOT-CA-08-008)

National Cancer Institute

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-CA-08-008.html>

Notice Regarding RFA-CE-08-001 Youth Violence Prevention through Community-Level Change
(NOT-CE-08-001)

(NOT-CE-08-001)

National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-CE-08-001.html>

Notice Regarding RFA-CE-08-007 Assessing the Effects of Interpersonal Violence Prevention on Suicide
(NOT-CE-08-007)

(NOT-CE-08-007)

National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-CE-08-007.html>

Assessment of Potential Cocaine Pharmacotherapies in Monkeys
(NOT-DA-08-024)

National Institute on Drug Abuse

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-DA-08-024.html>

Change in Procedure for Requests for Administrative Research Supplements to Promote Diversity and Re-entry in Health-Related Research (PA-05-015 and PA-04-126)
(NOT-DK-08-008)

(NOT-DK-08-008)

National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-DK-08-008.html>

Technical Assistance Workshop for the Bridges to the Baccalaureate Program
(PAR-07-411)

(NOT-GM-08-120)

National Institute of General Medical Sciences

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-GM-08-120.html>

National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, National Children's Study (NCS) Centers
(NOT-HD-08-004)
National Institute of Child Health and Human Development
<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-HD-08-004.html>

NIH Administrative Revisions for Human Pluripotent Stem Cell (hPSC) Research Using Non-Embryonic Sources
(NOT-NS-08-013)
National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke
National Eye Institute
National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute
National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism
National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases
National Institute of Biomedical Imaging and Engineering
National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders
National Institute of General Medical Sciences
National Institute of Mental Health
<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-NS-08-013.html>
Requests for Applications

Alcohol Tolerance: Contribution to Consumption (R01)
(RFA-AA-08-009)
National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism
Application Receipt Date(s): March 25, 2008
<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/rfa-files/RFA-AA-08-009.html>

Alcohol Tolerance: Contribution to Consumption (R21)
(RFA-AA-08-010)
National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism
Application Receipt Date(s): March 25, 2008
<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/rfa-files/RFA-AA-08-010.html>

Alzheimer's Disease Research Centers (P50)
(RFA-AG-09-001)
National Institute on Aging
Application Receipt Date(s): May 05, 2008
<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/rfa-files/RFA-AG-09-001.html>

Dissertation Grant Awards for Doctoral Candidates for Violence-Related Injury Prevention Research in Minority Communities (R49)
(RFA-CE-08-005)
National Center for Injury Prevention and Control
Application Receipt Date(s): February 15, 2008
<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/rfa-files/RFA-CE-08-005.html>

Resource Core Transdisciplinary Prevention Research Centers (P30)
(RFA-DA-08-012)
National Institute on Drug Abuse
Application Receipt Date(s): April 15, 2008
<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/rfa-files/RFA-DA-08-012.html>

Mechanisms and Management of Cardiovascular and Metabolic Complications of HIV/AIDS (R01)
(RFA-HL-08-003)
National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute
Application Receipt Date(s): March 25, 2008
<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/rfa-files/RFA-HL-08-003.html>
Program Announcements

Community Participation in Research (R01)
(PA-08-074)
Office of Behavioral and Social Science Research
National Cancer Institute
National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute
National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism
National Institute of Child Health and Human Development
National Institute on Drug Abuse
National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders
National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research
National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences
National Institute of Nursing Research
National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health
Application Receipt/Submission Date(s): Multiple dates, see announcement.
<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-08-074.html>

Research on the Economics of Diet, Activity and Energy Balance (R21)
(PA-08-077)
National Cancer Institute
National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute
National Institute on Aging
National Institute of Nursing Research
Office of Behavioral and Social Science Research
Application Receipt/Submission Date(s): Multiple dates, see announcement.
<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-08-077.html>

Research on the Economics of Diet, Activity, and Energy Balance (R01)
(PA-08-078)
National Cancer Institute
National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute
National Institute on Aging
National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases
National Institute of Nursing Research
Office of Behavioral and Social Science Research
Application Receipt/Submission Date(s): Multiple dates, see announcement.
<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-08-078.html>

NIDA Core "Center of Excellence" Grant Program (P30)
(PAR-08-073)
National Institute on Drug Abuse
Application Receipt/Submission Date(s): April 15, 2008; February 26, 2009,
February 26, 2010

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PAR-08-073.html>

Community Participation Research Targeting the Medically Underserved (R01)
(PAR-08-075)

Office of Behavioral and Social Science Research

National Cancer Institute

National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism

National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases

National Institute of Child Health and Human Development

National Institute on Drug Abuse

National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders

National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research

National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences

National Institute of Mental Health

National Institute of Nursing Research

Office of Research on Women's Health

Application Receipt/Submission Date(s): May 16, 2008, May 15, 2009, and May 14, 2010

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PAR-08-075.html>

Community Participation Research Targeting the Medically Underserved (R21)
(PAR-08-076)

Office of Behavioral and Social Science Research

National Cancer Institute

National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism

National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases

National Institute of Child Health and Human Development

National Institute on Drug Abuse

National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders

National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences

National Institute of Mental Health

National Institute of Nursing Research

Application Receipt/Submission Date(s): May 14, 2010

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PAR-08-076.html>

NIMH Research Education Grants (R25)

(PAR-08-079)

National Institute of Mental Health

Application Receipt/Submission Date(s): September 25 annually for new, resubmission, renewal, and revision applications. January 7th annually for AIDS Applications.

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PAR-08-079.html>

Quotes

The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.

--Eleanor Roosevelt

All our dreams can come true, if we have the courage to pursue them.

--Walt Disney

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character.
--Martin Luther King, Jr.

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