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**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

***NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH***

***National Cancer Institute***

*Health Care Decision-making-* The Committee applauds NCI's investment in staff and resources to help build the science of health care decision-making. Such research will improve understanding of human decision-making processes so that individuals can make more informed choices about their health, and so more useful decision support systems can be constructed. Efforts to integrate basic behavioral and social research in judgment and decision-making, and applied cancer decision making will serve to harness the work of basic researchers, who may not have previously applied their work to health settings. *Page 100*

*Psychoneuroimmunology and Cancer-* The Committee is interested in NCI's initiative to evaluate the complex interrelationships among emotional, behavioral, neural and immunological processes and how they may affect the etiology and progression of cancer. NCI's BiMPED initiative is a good example of leveraging the institute's resources to seed new research across NIH on fundamental mechanisms and processes that may affect multiple diseases and conditions. *Page 102*

***National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute***

*Behavioral Research on Long-term Exercise Benefits-* The Committee encourages NHLBI to continue its research program on longterm behavior change, particularly as it concerns physical activity. NHLBI-funded research showed that moderate-intensity exercise was as effective in a long-term program as high-intensity exercise in enabling patients to maintain weight loss for over a year. NHLBI is encouraged to continue its focus on the role of exercise in health, and factors that increase the likelihood that sedentary adults and youth can initiate and maintain programs of physical activity to prevent obesity. *Page 103-104*

***National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases***

*Behavioral Research-* The Committee encourages NIDDK's initiative to expand research on childhood obesity, particularly behavioral research on physical activity in children in various site-specific settings (schools, after-school care, or other community venues). The goal of such research would be to explore methods in pediatric populations for the

prevention of inappropriate weight gain among those not overweight; to prevent further weight gain among those already overweight or obese; or treatment of overweight or obesity to prevent the complications of associated co-morbidities. The Committee applauds NIDDK's proposed long-term effort to address the relative contributions of the environmental and behavioral factors that lead to excessive weight gain and obesity among children. *Page 110*

### ***National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke***

*Behavioral Research and Measurement of Cognitive Function-* The Committee applauds the efforts of NINDS to understand the mechanisms of executive function and ways to enhance cognitive rehabilitation for neurological disease. The Committee commends NINDS for its leadership in research to develop and validate neuropsychological test batteries and other instruments needed to measure executive function, including higher level cognitive processes such as working memory, decision-making, anticipation, and planning. Such tests are critical measurement tools for establishing the efficacy of interventions in NINDS clinical trials. *Page 117-118*

*Interdisciplinary Research-* The Committee encourages NINDS to continue exploring novel pathways by which cognitive neuroscientists and rehabilitation clinicians can apply new findings of central nervous system plasticity towards optimal treatment outcomes for patients with disorders of the brain affecting higher thought processes. The Committee applauds NINDS for promoting the establishment of multidisciplinary teams of scientists including neurologists, cognitive functional imaging experts and computational modelers in order to accelerate progress in the field of cognitive rehabilitation. By focusing on the limited set of neurological conditions (stroke, traumatic brain injury, and brain tumor) where these partnerships are likely to produce realistic gains in higher level functioning, NINDS may provide a model for interdisciplinary approaches to a range of conditions in which residual capacity is more difficult to measure. *Page 121*

*Basic Research on Pre-Disease Pathways-* As the NIH institute most concerned with basic research, NIGMS has provided leadership in research on physiological and biological structures and functions that may play roles in numerous health conditions. The Committee encourages NIGMS to collaborate with other institutes including NCI, NIMH and the Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research to fund research to integrate physiological knowledge of pre-disease pathways with behavioral studies. *Page 127*

### ***National Institute on Child Health and Human Development***

*Behavioral Science.--*The Committee emphasizes its strong support for the broad portfolio of behavioral research at NICHD, and supports NICHD's efforts to determine the biological, behavioral, and social factors that affect cognitive, social, and personality development of children in a variety of settings. The Committee encourages research on effective ways to promote and sustain healthy family formations for low-income families, including families of color. The Committee is particularly concerned about rising rates of

childhood obesity and supports continued initiatives to promote healthy behaviors in children and adolescents and research to prevent health risk behaviors. *Page 128*

*Learning and School Readiness.*--The Committee commends NICHD on its commitment to research in reading, learning disabilities, and math and science cognition. NICHD is encouraged to support additional research on developing comprehensive, culturally neutral and developmentally appropriate assessments and instruments to measure cognitive, social and emotional skills for pre-school-aged children that are necessary for school readiness. *Page 130*

*National Children's Study-* The Committee strongly supports full and timely implementation of the National Children's Study. This study aims to quantify the impacts of a broad range of environment influences, including physical, chemical, biological and social influences, on child health and development. The Committee urges the NICHD to coordinate the involvement of the Department, the lead Federal partners--CDC, EPA, and NIEHS--and other interested institutes, agencies, and non-Federal partners conducting research on children's environmental health and development, such that this study is ready for the field no later than 2006. *Page 130*

#### ***National Institute on Aging***

*Behavioral Research and Older Workers-* The Committee encourages NIA to expand research on the needs of older workers. Since more baby boomers will be working well beyond the traditional age of retirement, more information is needed about the ways in which workplaces and workplace technology can be better designed to accommodate the needs of older workers. *Page 136*

*Cognitive Research.*--The Committee has noted the results of the NIA-funded clinical trial, ACTIV, in which interventions to improve various aspects of cognition in older people were found to be effective, but did not generalize to improved cognitive performance overall. Understanding that changes in memory and cognition are troubling to older people and threaten their independence, the Committee encourages NIA to consider next steps in research to develop cognition-enhancing interventions and report back on additional efforts. *Page 136*

#### ***National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism***

*Drinking as a Development Disorder.*--The Committee understand that new NIAAA research has shown serious drinking problems previously associated with middle adulthood often begin to emerge during adolescence and young adulthood. The Committee encourages NIAAA to continue researching alcohol-related problems in a developmental context and recognizes that alcohol abuse and dependence are best characterized as developmental disorders that become manifest throughout the lifespan. *Page 145*

*Knowledge Transfer.*--The Committee urges NIAAA to redouble its efforts to transfer new knowledge to communities and to primary care health providers who can apply it to prevention and treatment. Recognizing the developmental nature of alcohol-related problems, NIAAA should continue to focus intensively on the transition from childhood into adolescence, adolescence itself, and the transition from adolescence into young adulthood. The Committee looks forward to research findings that will reduce the risk to future generations of Americans and will spare countless additional parents from suffering the consequences of problem drinking in their children. *Page 145*

*Underage Drinking.*--The Committee acknowledges that alcohol is, by far, the psychoactive substance most often used by youth, leading to numerous problems for themselves such as lower grades or school failure, social problems, physical problems, such as hangovers or medical illnesses, unwanted or unintended sexual activity, physical and sexual assault, memory problems, increased risk for suicide and homicide, alcohol-related car crashes and death from alcohol poisoning. The Committee recognizes that alcohol consumption represents one of the most important public health problems among youth today. *Page 146*

*Using an Integrative Approach.*--The Committee encourages NIAAA to continued directing substantial effort and resources toward the achievement of a more fully integrated and comprehensive scientific understanding of the environmental, behavioral, biological, and genetic factors that promote the initiation, maintenance, and acceleration of alcohol use, and that influence the transition into harmful alcohol use, including abuse and dependence. *Page 146*

### ***National Institute on Drug Abuse***

*Adolescent Drug Use.*--The Committee is pleased with the Institute's focus on adolescents. The Committee notes that if drug use is to be reduced, there must be a better understanding of the adolescent decision-making process so that more effective prevention programs can be developed. NIDA is urged to increase its research to better understand the mechanisms underlying adolescent judgment, decision-making, impulsivity and risk-taking. *Page 146*

*Co-morbidity.*--Co-morbidity between drug abuse and mental illness is common and may reflect common contributing factors. The Committee urges NIDA to expand research efforts to better understand the neurobiological underpinnings of these co-occurring disorders; to elucidate risk and protective factors for development of mental health and substance abuse problems; and more specifically to explore the impact of stimulant therapies for mental disorders such as ADHD on later drug use disorders. The Committee also encourages NIDA to examine how treatment services can best accommodate the co-morbid nature of these disorders. *Page 147*

*Drug Abuse and HIV/AIDS.*--The Committee understands HIV/AIDS continues to disproportionately affect vulnerable populations in the United States (e.g. criminal justice populations, pregnant women, minorities and youth) and that drug abuse is often a factor

in transmission of HIV/AIDS. Therefore, the Committee urges NIDA to continue its support of research that is focused on the development and testing of drug-abuse related interventions designed to reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS in these populations. *Page 147*

*Primary Care Settings and Youth.*--Primary care settings, such as offices of pediatricians and general practitioners, are potential key points of access to prevent and treat problem drug use among young people; yet primary care and drug abuse services are commonly delivered through separate systems. The Committee encourages NIDA to expand support for health services research on effective ways to educate primary care providers about drug abuse; develop brief behavioral interventions for preventing and treating drug use and related health problems, particularly among adolescents; and develop methods to integrate drug abuse screening, assessment, prevention and treatment into primary health care settings. *Page 147*

### ***National Institute of Mental Health***

*Behavioral Science-* The Committee is aware that NIMH is reviewing its portfolio in basic behavioral science and encourages NIMH to continue its commitment to strengthen behavioral research that examines the basic psychological functions that promote mental health or become disturbed in mental disorders. The Committee further recognizes the potential contribution of research on cognitive, personality, emotional, and social processes that underlie behavioral functioning and urges their inclusion in interdisciplinary research. The Committee is pleased that the National Mental Health Advisory Council has established a basic science working group and looks forward to receiving a report on the working group's conclusions regarding research opportunities in basic behavioral sciences relating to mental health. *Page 149*

*Prevention Research-* The Committee places a high priority on prevention research, particularly with respect to mental disorders among children and adolescents, in identifying protective factors against the negative impacts of stress among young adults, and in developing strategies to strengthen the family. *Page 151*

*Psychological Impacts of Terrorism-* The Committee supports NIMH research related to the psychological impact of both acute and chronic exposure to threats of violence, including terrorism and war, with particular emphasis on vulnerable populations, such as trauma survivors, children and older adults. The Committee encourages NIMH to expand its research portfolio to include research related to factors that promote detection or prediction, prevention, and post-exposure recovery and resilience. *Page 151*

*Translating Behavioral Research-* The Committee recognizes and strongly supports NIMH's efforts to advance the application of behavioral research and interventions in clinical settings to address the public health burden of mental disorders. The Committee strongly supports translational research in the behavioral and social sciences to address how basic behavioral processes, such as cognition, emotion, motivation, development and social interaction, inform the diagnosis, treatment and delivery of services for mental

disorders. Behavioral interventions are especially needed for children and adolescents with mental disorders. *Page 153*

### ***National Human Genome Research Institute***

*Behavioral Research-* The Committee acknowledges NHGRI's leadership in establishing a social and behavioral intramural research branch within its intramural program. The new branch will work to translate the discoveries from the recently completed Human Genome Project into interventions for health promotion and disease prevention, and for counseling patients and families dealing with the impact of devastating genetic disorders. The SBRB also will investigate the complex social, ethical and public policy impact of genomic research. *Page 154*

### ***Office of the Director***

*Basic Behavioral Research-* The Committee notes with interest that NIH has undertaken a review of basic behavioral and social sciences research funded by the National Institutes of Health. The working group, composed of outside scientists and chaired by a member of the Advisory Council to the NIH Director, is charged in part with reviewing NIH's portfolio and identifying areas of opportunity in basic behavioral and social sciences, consistent with NIH's mission, that NIH should consider supporting. Basic research in these sciences is fundamental to an understanding of the mechanisms of sensation and perception, development, learning and memory, and group dynamics and behavior, among other areas. The Committee reiterates its support for NIH's history of investment in basic behavioral and social sciences research and looks forward to reviewing the report of the working group. *Page 163*

*Interdisciplinary Research and Training-* The committee notes OBSSR's efforts to develop new mechanisms for training scientists in more than one academic discipline to create a scientific workforce better prepared to research multi-faceted problems. OBSSR is directed to report back to the committee on interdisciplinary research issues such as cross-disciplinary support for the new mechanisms, numbers of applicants, and any barriers encountered in implementing the new program. *Page 168*

## **DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

### ***Institute of Education Sciences (IES)***

The Committee recognizes the critical role that IES plays in achieving the important goals set by the No Child Left Behind Act and encourages IES to continue its progress in translating scientifically based research findings into classroom practice. The Committee is interested in support for programs that bring advances in cognitive, developmental, educational science and neuroscience into the classroom by informing curriculum development in schools and in graduate schools of education. Research that focuses on the key processes of attention, memory, and reasoning are essential for learning and are likely to produce substantial gains in academic achievement. The Committee also

supports the Institute's research investments in reading comprehension, teacher quality, English language learners, and educational interventions in mathematics, science and reading. *Page 284*