

Breast Cancer Research Council Meeting Minutes
October 4, 2002
Oakland, CA

Members Present: Ellen Mahoney, Sandy Walsh, Anna Wu, Elaine Ashby, Georjean Stoodt, Diana Chingos, Janet Howard-Espinoza, Vicki Boriack, Robert Kaplan, Debra Oto-Kent, Jacqueline Papkoff

Members Absent: Craig Henderson, Dorothy Bainton, Michael Figueroa, Irene Linayao-Putman

Staff Present: Laurence Fitzgerald, Charles Gruder, Marion Kavanaugh-Lynch, Katherine McKenzie, Walter Price, Roslyn Roberts

Guest: Maureen Harrington, MPH - Cancer Detection Section, Department of Health Services
Marj Plumb, Consultant

I. Call to Order and Introduction:

Chair Anna Wu called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

II. Approval of June 1, 2002 Minutes: (Attachment 1)

The third paragraph of Section III - Cycle VIII Funding, was rewritten as follows: "Overall, 198 applications were received; 35% of the applications received were either a primary award type or primary priority issue and 65% were in the complementary award type and priority issues. 71 applications were eliminated from consideration for funding due to low scientific merit. Of the remaining 127 applications, 68 were recommended for funding. Of these 68 recommended for funding, 26 (38%) were Primary applications and 42 (62%) were Complementary applications. Funding was recommended for 38% of the total number of Primary applications received and 68% of the Primary applications with sufficient scientific merit. Funding was recommended for 33% of the total number of Complementary applications and 47% of the Complementary applications with sufficient scientific merit".

Motion: A motion was made by Vice Chair Sandy Walsh to approve the minutes as corrected. The motion was seconded by Robert Kaplan and passed unanimously.

III. Director's Report:

Mhel began the Director's report with a synopsis of the CBCRP council, reporting that the position of Medical Specialist vacated by the resignation of Robert Carlson was filled by Michael Figueroa. To date, seven of the eight seats have been filled leaving one opening for a scientist/clinician. She continued with a brief overview of the CBCRP staff roles along with a list of current and future publications produced by the CBCRP staff. She discussed the Cycle IX Call for Applications and timelines and encouraged council members to review the Call and raise any issues or questions.

The CBCRP has been established as one of the recipients of donations pledged through the United Way Campaign. Laura Talmus and Associates staged a rally at the UCOP campus urging employees to make donations to the Program through the United Way. The redesigned CBCRP web site will include a media center, fund raising content and include utilities which will allow online donations. She announced that legislation to renew the tax check off for another five years passed both Houses and was signed by the governor. Historically, the CBCRP has received no funds to cover the cost of administering the program. Under the new legislation, the Program will receive five per cent for administrative costs.

In honor of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, Farallon Restaurant, an upscale San Francisco eatery, will donate one dollar for every fixed price lunch sold during the month of October as well as distribute the Program's brochures and donation envelopes to its patrons. Other fundraising efforts include working with Clear Channel to advertise the tax check off through bus shelters and billboards, direct mailings and a major donor program.

Mhel reported on her interview with KRON TV which is scheduled to air during the month of October. Other media coverage included an article featured in MAMM Magazine which depicts the CBCRP as a model of a groundbreaking statewide program and The California Society of CPA's, with an audience of 28,000 members in California, will publish an article written by the CBCRP in their November issue

The first meeting of the Executive Committee of the Community Partners is scheduled for November 15, 2002 at Paramount Studios. Executive Committee members include Faith Fancher, Judith Guggenheim, Susan Love, Marie Pellegrini, and Ron Burkle.

Breast Cancer 101, a collaboration between the Susan Love Foundation and the CBCRP is scheduled for March 26- 27, 2003 in Santa Barbara, California. The purpose of this conference is to provide a forum in which new breast cancer researchers can obtain information on cancer basics and breast biology and in which experienced breast cancer researchers can gain information about work in other fields. The CBCRP is also co-hosting a workshop on Smoking and Breast Cancer during the Tobacco-Related Disease Research Program's annual investigators meeting held December 4-5, 2002 in San Jose. Mhel urged all council members to attend.

The Industry Committee has developed two promising ideas which are to create an award mechanism for researchers at Biotech companies and to promote the translation of promising discoveries by recruiting finders and facilitating the translation process. The next step is to identify and hire a contractor to collaborate and assist with interviews and data analysis.

Mhel gave an update of the 2002 Annual Report and the 2003 Advances. After a brief summary of the history of the two reports, she reiterated the council's responsibility to prepare the report to the Legislature. Council members were asked to determine what role they would like to take in the preparation of the Annual Report.

MOTION: Chair Anna Wu called for a motion to ask the CBCRP Staff to prepare both the Annual Report to the Legislature and the Advances In Breast Cancer Report. The motioned was seconded by Robert Kaplan.

IV. New Business

A. 2002-2003 Workplan/Goals for the Year

Chair Anna Wu outlined the 2002-2003 work plan and goals for the upcoming year, urging new council members to participate on the various committees.

B. Committee Reports:

1. Collaboration with BCEDP (Attachment 7)

Walter Price reported on the name change from the Breast Cancer Early Detection Program (BCEDP) to the Cancer Detection Program, Every Woman Counts. The committee is in the process of electing a Chair and developing a statement of purpose along with goals and objectives. The decision was made to focus the committee's efforts on developing a close relationship with the State as opposed to the Partnerships. In addition, the committee is working on a plan of action which would allow more involvement in the 2003 Symposium.

2. Outreach Committee (Attachment 8)

Ellen Mahoney presented an overview of the upcoming 2003 Symposium scheduled for September 12-14, 2003. The committee decided to retain the symposium name "From Research to Action" and add a sub-title. Progress has been made in suggesting the general structure of the symposium and in developing a list of potential keynote and plenary speakers.

3. Priority Setting Committee (Attachment 9)

Mhel reviewed that the council is now in the second year of the 3-year priority setting calendar and presented a detailed discussion on the committees' six month plan to present data and information to the council, outlining criteria and timelines.

At the November meeting, a panel will discuss critical issues in prevention and screening and in February a different panel will discuss critical issues in treatment, diagnosis and quality of life. A council discussion will follow each panel presentation. Written summaries will be distributed to Council members. In addition, the council section of the CBCRP website will offer an electronic version of all materials.

Mhel outlined the committee's plan to recruit consultants to gather and analyze data. Other consultants, by utilizing previously collected data, would yield their interpretation and analysis of what they deemed important and possibly issue a white paper on it for the council. This would bring several different perspectives to the priority-setting process and could possibly produce a publication for the people of California.

4. Evaluation

Anna Wu outlined the various award types being evaluated. They include the Post Doctoral Fellowships (report completed), the New Investigator Awards (report ready for publication) and the IDEA Awards (underway).

C. Committee Composition (Attachment 10)

Anna Wu reported that, although there are a lot of new members to the council, there are enough continuing members to allow continuity of the various committee projects. Once again, she encouraged new members to participate on a committee.

D. Review of Joining Forces Conference Award (Attachment 11)

MOTION: A motion was made by Vice Chair Sandy Walsh to fund the proposal based on the CBCRP staff resolving concerns outlined by the council. The motioned was seconded by Robert Kaplan with one member opposed. Council member Ellen Mahoney excused herself due to a conflict of interest.

V. Evaluation Report:

Anna provided background on the concept of the IDEA and STEP Awards. The idea behind these grants is to fund innovative, developmental exploratory projects that could lead to breakthroughs or new avenues of research. During cycles I-VI, the CBCRP has invested over \$3.2 million in IDEA awards, 4% of the total dollars awarded and 11% of the total number of grants.

Anna outlined the goals of the evaluation of these awards, which was to evaluate the short and intermediate outcomes resulting from the CBCRP funded IDEA Awards and to improve the IDEA

Award mechanism. She went on to discuss the expected outcomes, methods and eligibility criteria along with a detailed description of respondents.

Impact of funding revealed that the great majority felt that their research projects would not have happened, or would have been slowed or greatly delayed without the IDEA Award. Anna discussed short-term and intermediate outcomes and offered feedback and final conclusions to the council.

VI. Priority Setting Presentations

Presentation 1: Maureen Harrington

Maureen Harrington, of the California Department of Health Services, presented the State Plan to Prevent and Control Breast and Cervical Cancer. This conceptual level plan articulates strategies to address gaps and identify opportunities for collaboration between potential partners and supporters. She identified the partners' role as the mechanism to implement the Plan by determining the type of support and resources required, to enhance public and policymakers' awareness of needs and opportunities, and to build relationships with local agencies and partnerships.

Maureen outlined the Plan's structure which is based on a continuum of cancer care risk reduction and prevention, detection and treatment. She identified methods of evaluation and led a discussion of recommendations applicable to CBCRP.

Presentation 2: Larry Fitzgerald, Katie McKenzie, Walter Price

CBCRP staff presented an analysis of the Program's innovative awards, currently called IDEA and STEP. Larry Fitzgerald gave an overview outlining the purpose of the innovative award types, a background and evolution of efforts in this area, some peer review and other evaluation methods used to best select the highest quality applications, and a comparison of how other funding agencies handle this type of funding.

Next, Katherine McKenzie offered statistical data of funding in recent grant cycles. Over the past four cycles (1999-2002), the innovative award funding ranged from 33-56% of total grants, and had accounted for \$5.1M to \$7.7M of total funding out of a grand total of about \$15-18M/yr. Thus, the innovative awards make up the bulk of the CBCRP portfolio. In terms of review committee scoring, it appeared that the funded IDEA and STEP applications had higher scoring elements for "innovation", but this was also true of other award types, too.

Walter Price gave examples of innovation grants illustrating some key points that these projects think "outside the box" and addressed topics of unusual interest. The grants discussed involved new approaches to measuring breast density and how placental factors are associated with disease risk in different races. Likewise, Larry and Katie gave other examples of how this type of funding offers unique opportunities to add new topics to our portfolio.

In the general discussion, Council was made aware of how the Program staff distinguishes applications of special merit, so that overall merit score doesn't become the sole factor in funding. The review committee's ability to switch award types from one category to another proved to be a concern especially for the IDEA applications. Apparently, about ½ of the funded IDEA applications are submitted as STEPs, but are switched to IDEAs by the review committee. This issue illustrates the reality that reviewers tend to discriminate against applications that lack preliminary data, which is a key element in the IDEA concept. Finally, the issues of preliminary data and award switching are points that the Program will look into to make sure our process is fair to all applicants.

B. 2002-2003 Calendar: (Attachment 5)

The council discussed the 2002-2003 Calendar and made recommendations for dates and venues of upcoming meetings.

VII. Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 pm.