

The seal of the Defense Health Board is a circular emblem. It features a central globe with a microscope superimposed over it. The globe is light blue and green, while the microscope is dark grey. The words "DEFENSE" and "HEALTH BOARD" are written in a serif font along the top and bottom inner edges of the seal, respectively. Two small stars are positioned on the left and right sides of the seal.

Public Health Subcommittee

Improving Defense Health Program Medical Research Processes

Defense Health Board

August 9, 2016



Overview

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Membership

Public Health Subcommittee

- Consists of 9 members including the
- Subcommittee chair



Tasking

(1 of 3)

“I request that the Defense Health Board (DHB). . . provide recommendations to the Department regarding approaches that would optimally support military medical professionals who oversee and conduct DHP medical research.”

- Acting Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel & Readiness) (USD(P&R)) Memo dated September 30, 2015



Tasking

(2 of 3)

Request that the Defense Health Board address and develop findings and recommendations on the following:

- Determine how DoD may improve visibility on Defense Health Program (DHP) medical research supported through separate funding sources (RDT&E and O&M) to enhance coordination of effort, oversight, and collaboration.
- Determine the major challenges that DoD investigators face in initiating, funding, conducting, and publishing DHP medical research.
- Determine how DoD may facilitate more efficient initiation and conduct of high-quality DHP medical research without compromising safety or data protection standards.



Tasking

(3 of 3)

Request that the Defense Health Board address and develop findings and recommendations on the following:

- Determine how DoD may improve Institutional Review Board processes to facilitate more efficient approval of multicenter studies and clinical trials.
- Determine cost-effective mechanisms to encourage more professionals to become engaged in medical research.
- Determine mechanisms to improve acknowledgement in public communications by other government agencies and industry of DoD's contributions to products it has funded or partially developed and subsequently handed off.



Timeline

Meetings Since Previous Board Meeting

- June 30, 2016 – Teleconference
- July 19, 2016 – Teleconference

Upcoming Meetings

- August 17, 2016 – Teleconference
- September 14-15, 2016 – Meeting at Defense Health Headquarters
- October 12, 2016 – Teleconference



Meeting Highlights

June 30, 2016

- Roundtable discussion with Madigan Army Medical Center clinical research leadership about creating a collaborative network of military investigators and DHP research challenges/opportunities

July 19, 2016

- Roundtable discussion with Henry M. Jackson Foundation leadership about using foundations to support military biomedical research



Recent Briefs Reinforce Preliminary Findings (1 of 2)

- Medical research is viewed as a secondary mission and accordingly has a lower priority for resources at military treatment facilities.
- There are inadequate numbers of experienced research personnel to provide institutional knowledge and to help navigate research processes.
- The rotation of personnel (junior and senior levels) compromises the completion of research projects.
- There are significant challenges associated with management of funds including: timely obligation of appropriated funds, obtaining external funding, and initiating/modifying contracts.



Recent Briefs Reinforce Preliminary Findings (2 of 2)

- Foundations provide a mechanism to more efficiently execute funding and contracting activities in support of research (at a cost).
- There is no easy way to use grant funding to compensate for a shift in clinical obligations (RVUs) to contract staff to free up time of active duty personnel to conduct research.
- Challenges in recruiting/retaining DoD investigators include slow hiring processes, less competitive salaries, and lack of clearly defined career paths with promotion potential.
- There is limited enterprise-wide visibility on the clinical investigation programs and their accomplishments (as noted in the tasking).



Way Ahead

- Continue monthly teleconferences/meetings
- Begin deliberation of findings and recommendations in Fall 2016
- Draft report for February 2017 DHB meeting