

## NIH, NCI, NCMHD, CDC & HRSA

OVAC advocates for increased funding for several agencies in the Department of Health and Human Services. A brief explanation of each agency appears below.

### **NIH: THE NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH**

Begun as a one-room Laboratory of Hygiene in 1887, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) today is one of the world's foremost medical research centers, and the Federal focal point for medical research in the U.S.

The NIH mission is to uncover new knowledge that will lead to better health for everyone. NIH works toward that mission by:

- Conducting research in its own laboratories;
- Supporting the research of non-Federal scientists in universities, medical schools, hospitals, and research institutions throughout the country and abroad;
- Helping in the training of research investigators; and
- Fostering communication of medical information.

The NIH is one of eight health agencies of the Public Health Services which, in turn, is part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Comprised of 27 separate components, mainly Institutes and Centers, NIH has 75 buildings on more than 300 acres in Bethesda, MD. From a total of about \$300 in 1887, the NIH budget has grown to \$27.8 billion in 2004.

### **NCI: THE NATIONAL CANCER INSTITUTE**

The National Cancer Institute (NCI) is a component of the NIH. The NCI, established under the National Cancer Act of 1937, is the Federal Government's principal agency for cancer research and training. The National Cancer Act of 1971 broadened the scope and responsibilities of the NCI and created the National Cancer Program.

The National Cancer Institute coordinates the National Cancer Program, which conducts and supports research, training, health information dissemination, and other programs with respect to the cause, diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of cancer, rehabilitation from cancer, and the continuing care of cancer patients and the families of cancer patients. Specifically, the Institute:

- Supports and coordinates research projects conducted by universities, hospitals, research foundations, and businesses throughout this country and abroad through research grants and cooperative agreements.
- Conducts research in its own laboratories and clinics.
- Supports education and training in fundamental sciences and clinical disciplines for participation in basic and clinical research programs and treatment programs relating to cancer through career awards, training grants, and fellowships.
- Supports research projects in cancer control.
- Supports a national network of cancer centers.

- Collaborates with voluntary organizations and other national and foreign institutions engaged in cancer research and training activities.
- Encourages and coordinates cancer research by industrial concerns where such concerns evidence a particular capability for programmatic research.
- Collects and disseminates information on cancer.
- Supports construction of laboratories, clinics, and related facilities necessary for cancer research through the award of construction grants.

### **NCMHD: THE NATIONAL CENTER ON MINORITY HEALTH AND HEALTH DISPARITIES**

The mission of the National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NCMHD) is to promote minority health and to lead, coordinate, support, and assess the NIH effort to reduce and ultimately eliminate health disparities. In this effort NCMHD will conduct and support basic, clinical, social, and behavioral research, promote research infrastructure and training, foster emerging programs, disseminate information, and reach out to minority and other health disparity communities.

While the diversity of the American population is one of the Nation's greatest assets, one of its greatest challenges is reducing the profound disparity in health status of America's racial and ethnic minorities, rural populations (e.g. Appalachian residents), and other similar groups, compared to the population as a whole. And although some of the causes of disparate health outcomes, such as differences in access to care, are beyond the scope of biomedical and bio-behavioral research, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) can play a vital role in addressing and easing health disparities involving cancer, diabetes, infant mortality, AIDS, cardiovascular illnesses, and many other diseases. Accordingly, the NIH has made health disparities a budget priority and an area of emphasis.

The NIH is also seeking to improve the visibility of minority health disparities research and other health disparities research as well as expand the role of such research in learning why some groups have disproportionately high rates of disease. In 2002, legislation authorized the establishment of the National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NCMHD) within the NIH. In addition to awarding grants and contracts independently, the Center will continue the legacy of the Office of Research on Minority Health in partnering with the NIH institutes and centers to support programs of health disparities research with a focus on basic and clinical research, training, and the dissemination of health information. In particular, the NCMHD will serve as the focal point for coordinating and focusing the minority health disparities research and other health disparities research programs at the NIH into a national health research agenda. The specific goals and purposes of the Center include the following:

- To assist in the development of an integrated national health research agenda, across disciplines, that reflects the current and emerging health needs of racial and ethnic minorities and other health disparity groups.
- To promote and facilitate the creation of a robust minority health research environment with sustained funding for a wide breadth of studies-- basic, clinical, and population research; studies on the influences of health processes; and research on the societal,

cultural, and environmental dimensions of health--all aimed at identifying potential risk factors for disparate health outcomes.

- To promote, assist, and support research capacity building activities in the minority and medically underserved communities, focusing on research infrastructure development, faculty career development, and increasing the number of underrepresented minority students and students from health disparity groups with an interest in careers in biomedical and bio-behavioral research.

## **CDC: CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is recognized as the lead federal agency for protecting the health and safety of people - at home and abroad, providing credible information to enhance health decisions, and promoting health through strong partnerships. CDC serves as the national focus for developing and applying disease prevention and control, environmental health, and health promotion and education activities designed to improve the health of the people of the United States.

CDC, located in Atlanta, Georgia, USA, is an agency of the Department of Health and Human Services. Dr. Julie L. Gerberding is the Director.

### **CDC's Mission**

***To promote health and quality of life by preventing and controlling disease, injury, and disability.***

CDC seeks to accomplish its mission by working with partners throughout the nation and world to monitor health, detect and investigate health problems, conduct research to enhance prevention, develop and advocate sound public health policies, implement prevention strategies, promote healthy behaviors, foster safe and healthful environments, and provide leadership and training.

CDC has developed and sustained many vital partnerships with public and private entities that improve service to the American people. In FY 2000, the workforce of CDC comprised approximately 8,500 FTE in 170 disciplines with a public health focus. Although CDC's national headquarters is in Atlanta, Georgia, more than 2,000 CDC employees work at other locations, including 47 state health departments. Approximately 120 are assigned overseas in 45 countries. CDC includes 12 Centers, Institutes, and Offices.

### **CDC's Cancer Prevention and Control Activities**

The CDC's Division of Cancer Prevention and Control (DCPC) conducts, supports, and promotes efforts to prevent cancer and to increase early detection of cancer. DCPC works with partners in the government, private, and nonprofit sectors to develop, implement, and promote effective cancer prevention and control practices nationwide.

## **HRSA: HEALTH SERVICES AND RESOURCES ADMINISTRATION**

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) is the principal Federal Agency charged with increasing access to basic health care for those who are medically underserved. Health care in the United States is among the finest in the world, but it is not available to everyone. At a time when the Nation enjoys unprecedented prosperity, millions of families still face barriers to quality health care because of their income, lack of insurance, isolation, or language and cultural differences. A recent Institute of Medicine report concluded that the Nation's health care safety net, while intact for the short term, is endangered over the longer term by shrinking resources (both funding and available practitioners) and expanding responsibility. Assuring a safety net for individuals and families who live outside the economic and medical mainstream is a key HRSA role.

Since HRSA's establishment, the Agency's budget has increased to a funding level of over \$6 billion, resources that benefit millions of Americans through HRSA programs. HRSA's portfolio includes a range of programs or initiatives designed to increase access to care, improve quality, and safeguard the health and well-being of the Nation's most vulnerable populations.

Collectively, HRSA programs work to improve access to care for the more than 41 million Americans who are uninsured and the 40 million who live in urban and rural medically underserved areas. HRSA supports over 700 community health centers; funds services for people living with HIV/AIDS through the Ryan White CARE (Comprehensive AIDS Resources Emergency) Act; assists States and health care organizations in improving services to mothers and children; oversees the national system that allocates organs, tissue, and bone marrow for transplant; and works with academic health centers and other training programs to enhance the supply, diversity, and distribution of the Nation's health care workforce.

During FY 02, HRSA became engaged in the new effort to prepare for bioterrorism and other mass casualty events. As part of special supplemental appropriations, HRSA implemented the Hospital Preparedness program. The purpose of this cooperative agreement program is to upgrade the preparedness of the Nation's hospitals and collaborating entities to respond to bioterrorism. This will also allow the health care system to become more prepared to deal with nonterrorist epidemics of rare diseases.

### **HRSA Bureau of Health Professionals – Division of Nursing**

The Division of Nursing is the key Federal focus for nursing education and practice. The Division provides national leadership to assure an adequate supply and distribution of qualified nursing personnel to meet the health needs of the Nation.

#### **Strategic Goals**

- Increase access through improved composition and distribution of nursing workforce.
- Increase diversity and cultural competence in nursing workforce.
- Enhance nursing workforce data and analytic activities.
- Improve the quality and outcomes of nursing education and practice.
- Provide public information and technical assistance relating to the nursing workforce.