

Minutes

UW Medical School Medical Education and Research Committee 5:00 PM January 19, 2005 – Room 4201 Health Sciences Learning Center

Members Present: Lynn Allen-Hoffmann, Sanjay Asthana, Dave DeMets, Norm Drinkwater, Maureen Durkin, John Frey, Susan Goelzer, Jeff Glassroth, Jeff Grossman, Debra Hullett, Rick Moss, Javier Nieto, Gordon Ridley, Susan Skochelak, Doug Smith, Jeff Stearns, Layton Ridders

Members Absent: Paul DeLuca, Greg Nycz, Joan Schiller

Guests: Philip Farrell, Patrick Boyle, Ken Mount, Karla Thompson, George Wilding

Staff: Tracy Cabot, Tonya Paulson, Eileen Smith

Jeff Grossman chaired the meeting in Paul DeLuca's absence. Prior to achieving a quorum, announcements were made.

2. Eileen Smith introduced Karla Thompson, the new accountant for The Wisconsin Partnership Fund. Smith announced that the MERC will be photographed at the February meeting for the annual report. The annual report is beginning to take shape, and she hopes that a rough draft will be available soon.

Smith announced that the OAC completed its first funding cycle in December by awarding 13 implementation grants totaling \$5.4 million. The grants support projects relating to children, women and minorities, child and maternal health, safe neighborhoods, and access to health care. Smith also commented on the challenge to the OAC's decision to go into executive session to consider the recipients for the competitive awards. The OAC based its decision on advice from UW legal services indicating that the public meetings law provides for closed sessions for the purpose of making competitive awards. UW and MCW are in discussions with a number of attorneys regarding this challenge. The outcome of these discussions may be relevant to MERC with respect to our upcoming competitive RFP process and the deliberations of the Application Review Subcommittee.

Grossman asked for MERC's consent to add Ken Mount to the agenda. Mount reminded MERC that they have awarded approximately \$1 million for an implementation grant for education initiatives, as well as three planning grants that run through May 2005. The Dean has made several awards from the Strategic Allocation Fund, including support for the MPH program, funding for Dr. Kindig's proposal, support for the Alzheimer's institute, and most recently funding for the Cancer Center initiative. Funding for the New Investigator RFP will be split between the Strategic Allocation and MERC.

Going forward, the 2005 calendar year budget will be approximately \$3 million for the Strategic Allocation and \$6 million for MERC awards. Taking into account the multi-year awards made so far, about one-half of the 2005 Strategic Allocation and one-third of the 2005 MERC budget is already committed. The remaining non-committed recurring funds are \$1.5 million in the Strategic Allocation, and \$3.9 million for MERC. There is a cash carryover from 2004 of \$3.2 million.

Having achieved a quorum, Grossman called the meeting to order at 5:27 p.m. and moved into the agenda.

1. The draft minutes from the December MERC meeting were presented. As no modifications were suggested, John Frey moved that the minutes be approved, and Lynn Allen-Hoffmann seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

3. The draft minutes of the January 11 Executive Subcommittee were distributed and summarized by Grossman. The Executive Subcommittee concentrated on the RFP application document, and suggested changing the name of the program to New Investigator Program. The Executive Subcommittee also thought that it might be useful to clarify the wording to allow for requests of less than \$100,000. There were no objections to that change. Allen-Hoffmann moved approval of the modified RFP and Susan Skochelak seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

4. Continuing on the topic of the RFP for New Investigators, Grossman circulated a list of faculty nominated for the Application Review Subcommittee, which will be made up of four members of the Medical School Research Committee with expertise in basic biomedical research, six faculty at large from the Medical School with complementary expertise, and two MERC members. Grossman announced one correction to the faculty list—Dave DeMets must be removed from this list because he is a MERC member. Grossman asked each MERC member to write down their top six choices from the faculty list on a 3 X 5” card, and their top two choices from the MERC on a separate card. The results of the balloting will be discussed by the Executive Subcommittee and brought back to the next MERC meeting for final approval.

5. Dean Farrell reported on the Strategic Initiatives allocation for the MPH and Alzheimer’s Disease programs. The MPH program was discussed at the Medical School’s Academic Planning Council (APC) this morning. Pat Remington has been appointed director of the MPH program, and he reported that he is pleased with applications received thus far. Susan Skochelak indicated that the APC will likely receive a proposal for a MD/MPH dual degree in the coming months—a number of medical students are very interested in such a program. She noted that some funds might be available to begin development of the distance education component of the MPH.

Farrell also reported that Governor Doyle has included funds in his budget for the Wisconsin Alzheimer’s Institute. If funding for the Alzheimer’s Institute is awarded by the state, we will have to ensure that there is no overlap in funding with the award from the Strategic Initiative fund.

Farrell then asked for input on a proposal he has received from Mike Fiore requesting \$250,000 per year for three years for a project in the Center for Tobacco Research and Intervention (CTRI) that was not fully funded by an NIH grant. The project studies how the quality of life changes for people who quit smoking versus those who don't quit smoking. NIH is providing \$13.5 million, but the CTRI needs \$1.5 million to carry out the quality of life project. CTRI has already received pledges of \$1.5 million from the Medical School, as well as \$750,000 from campus, and other funding from the Department of Medicine and the Cancer Center. Therefore, this proposal could raise questions with respect to supplanting.

Farrell stated that the guidelines for use of the Strategic Allocation fund did not anticipate applications to cover funding gaps. He asked for committee input on this general issue, especially since other investigators might come forward with gap funding requests. John Frey responded that use of the Strategic Initiatives fund in this way was not appropriate, and that it was our goal to support ideas that are unlikely to get funding elsewhere. Allen-Hoffmann asked if the local sources of funding were specifically targeted to this project or were they general funds for support of CTRI. Wilding and Glassroth reported that the funds from their respective units were given as institutional support for this grant. Farrell thanked the committee for their input, and will make a final decision on this request after discussion with Paul DeLuca.

6. Grossman made a presentation about health services research (HSR), which he prefaced by stating that this is not a proposal for action tonight, but rather is given to provide information and ask for input. He will present a proposal at the next meeting.

Grossman circulated three publications about the problems of healthcare and healthcare delivery at academic institutions. He reviewed the MERC's decision matrix, and reminded the group of the disconnect between the increasing amounts of scientific data and biomedical knowledge and associated improvement in health. He also presented definitions of health services research, and showed how this research is part of the continuum of increasing knowledge.

Grossman asked for feedback on the concept of a Center for Healthcare Improvement (CHI). He described the goals of the CHI, which include establishing leadership in HSR by building faculty across multiple disciplines and increasing the number of HSR students and trainees through the development of new curriculum. Grossman showed a governance structure for the Center in the Medical School. CHI research would be focused on such issues as patient safety, community-based practice effectiveness research, health disparities and access, value purchasing, and informatics.

Grossman presented a rough draft of yearly budget for the CHI. The total budget is about \$890,000 per year. He will be developing a request for support to MERC totaling \$1.5 million over 4 years.

Norm Drinkwater asked how many faculty on campus are currently pursuing this type of research, and are there any mechanisms for them to interact. Grossman said there are about 20 people. Frey stated that there is no coherent group that works on this. Skochelak spoke in favor of this proposal, and mentioned that we have some aspects of HSR in our curriculum already. Farrell suggested having a national leader such as Don Berwick as a visiting professor to share his perspectives on HSR. Bing Ridders asked if there is a unique area of HSR where we could make seminal contribution. Grossman responded that one criticism of HSR is that academic medical centers don't cover the full spectrum of research because of the type of patients; however, at UW Hospital and Clinics, we have a broad spectrum from chronically ill patients in communities to quaternary care.

Grossman thanked everyone for their input, and requested that members get back to him with questions before the next MERC meeting.

7. Skochelak gave a brief update on the Innovations in Education implementation grant. She stated that they are making progress in changing the curriculum and the clinical skills teaching and assessment center. A staff retreat will be held to discuss these issues. The distant education component is not yet underway.

DeMets reported that the Clinical Trials Network planning group has identified Howard Bailey as the clinical leader for the project. Time has been spent working on defining the software and computing needs for this project. They are studying ways to collaborate with SHOW in various areas; for example, tissue banking. George Wilding commented that the UWCCC has a tissue bank proposal which could be a template for some of the activities of CT and SHOW.

8. Grossman asked for suggestions for discussion topics for future meetings. Some topics mentioned include reviewing the annual report, a presentation about community based research, a proposal from Regenerative Medicine, the finalization of the Application Review Subcommittee, a formal presentation of the HSR proposal, and discussion of a small grants program for education proposals.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:
Tracy Cabot, Recorder