

# NCI Director's Report

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Norman E. Sharpless, M.D.

*1st Virtual Joint Meeting of NCI Board of Scientific  
Advisors & National Cancer Advisory Board*

April 9, 2020

@NCIDirector  
@TheNCI

# Today's Meeting

**Deputy Director's Report** – *Dr. Doug Lowy*

**Update: NYU Coronavirus Activity** – *Dr. Dafna Bar-Sagi*

**Clinical Trial Policies** – *Dr. James Doroshow*

**Closed Session:** Discussion of Research Efforts – *Dr. Dinah Singer*

# NCI & COVID-19

- Today's discussion is focused on SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19
- We will discuss the impact of the pandemic on NCI and the extramural community.
- COVID-19 has affected everything we do at NCI. We've adapted how we do business, and we're embracing opportunities to contribute to COVID research.
- Cancer research and cancer care remain JOB #1 at NCI.
- Even during these difficult times, we are still making progress toward our mission of reducing cancer suffering

# NCI & COVID-19

## Intramural Research Program

*Leaders in virology research*

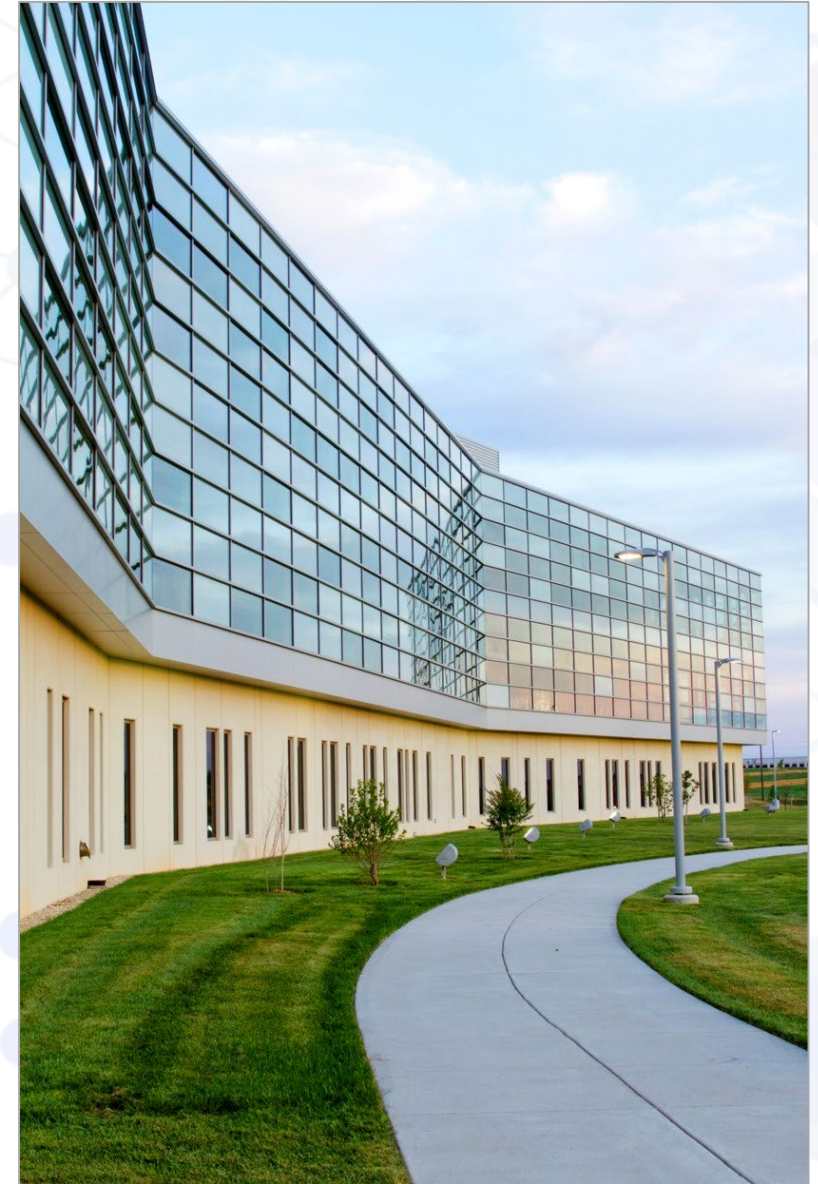
- *Lowy, Schiller, Varmus, Gallo, Broder*

## Frederick National Laboratory for Cancer Research

- *Facilities: CryoEM, Serology, more*
- *Unique contracting authorities*
- *Robust collaborative relationships*

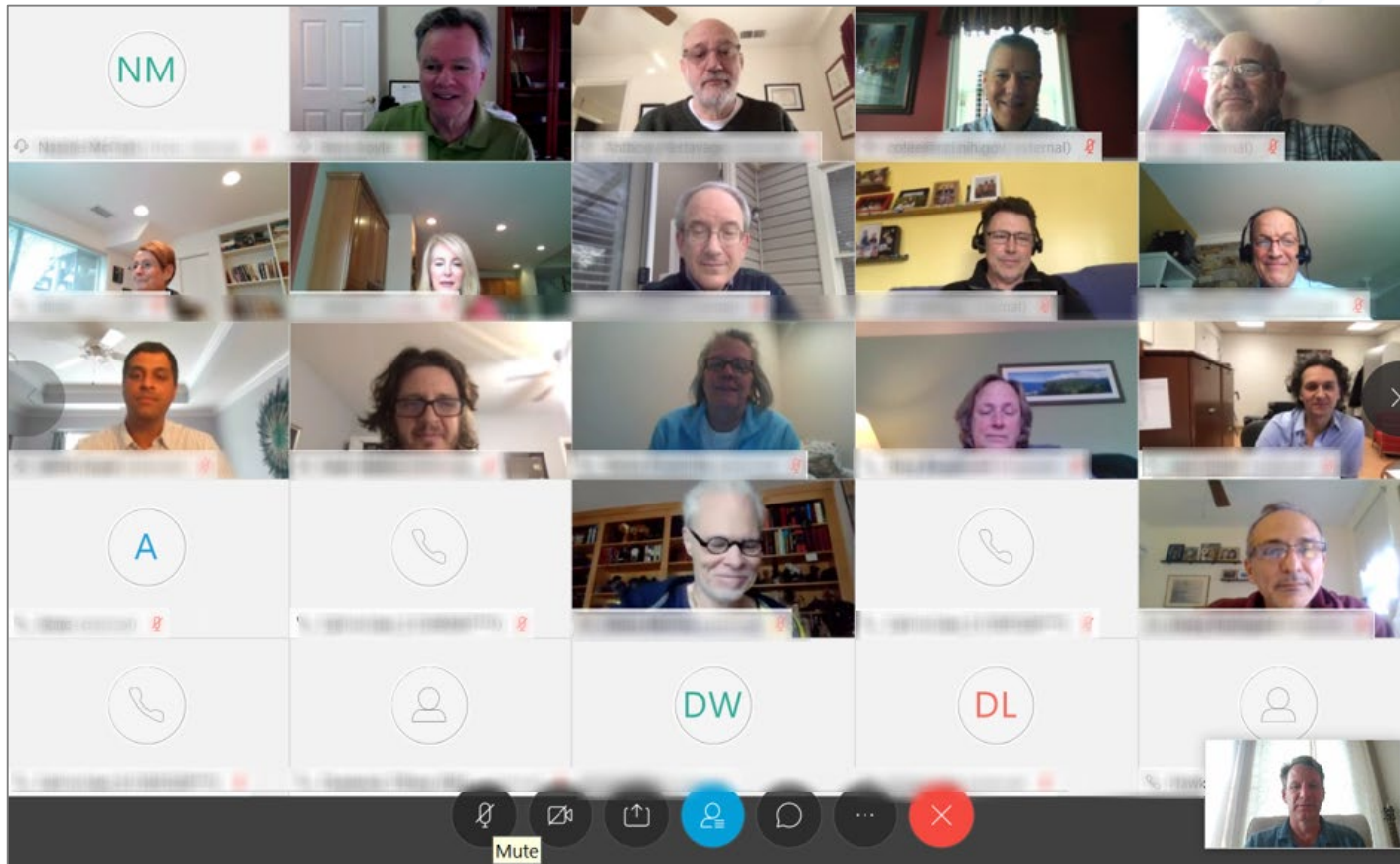
## Grantee Institutions and Networks

diverse skills and powerful technology






# NCI Operations: Telework, *Minimal Maintenance*, Critical Clinical Care



# Cancer Information Service | 1-800-4-CANCER

## Contact Us for Help

 Call 1-800-4-CANCER


(1-800-422-6237)

Mon - Fri

9 a.m. to 9 p.m. ET

 Email Us

[NCInfo@nih.gov](mailto:NCInfo@nih.gov)

 Live Chat

LiveHelp

Mon - Fri

9 a.m. to 9 p.m. ET





# Information for people with cancer

The screenshot shows the National Cancer Institute (NCI) website. At the top is the NCI logo and name. A navigation bar includes links for 1-800-4-CANCER, Live Chat, Publications, and Dictionary, along with a language toggle for Español. Below this is a main menu with categories like ABOUT CANCER, CANCER TYPES, RESEARCH, GRANTS & TRAINING, NEWS & EVENTS, and ABOUT NCI, plus a search bar. The breadcrumb trail indicates the path: Home > Contact Us for Help > Emergency Resources. On the left, a sidebar under 'CONTACT US FOR HELP' lists 'Emergency Resources' with a highlighted link for 'Coronavirus Information for Patients'. The main content area features the title 'Coronavirus: What People with Cancer Should Know' and a section 'ON THIS PAGE' containing a bulleted list of topics.

**NIH NATIONAL CANCER INSTITUTE**

Español

1-800-4-CANCER Live Chat Publications Dictionary

ABOUT CANCER CANCER TYPES RESEARCH GRANTS & TRAINING NEWS & EVENTS ABOUT NCI search

Home > Contact Us for Help > Emergency Resources

**CONTACT US FOR HELP**

Emergency Resources

**Coronavirus Information for Patients**

Coronavirus Information for Researchers

## Coronavirus: What People with Cancer Should Know

### ON THIS PAGE

- What is coronavirus, or COVID-19?
- If I have cancer, am I at higher risk of getting or dying from COVID-19?
- If I have cancer, how can I protect myself?
- I receive cancer treatment at a medical facility. What should I do about getting treatment?
- I participate in a clinical trial at a medical facility. What should I do?
- What should I do if I have symptoms of an infection?
- What if I have additional questions?

# Information for Grantees



**NIH NATIONAL CANCER INSTITUTE**

**CONTACT US FOR HELP**

Emergency Resources

Coronavirus Information for Patients

Coronavirus Information for Researchers

**Coronavirus: Guidance for Cancer Researchers**

COVID-19 is affecting daily life around the globe, but the National Cancer Institute (NCI) remains committed to sustaining progress against cancer. NCI and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) are taking affirmative steps to help inv

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- Extra
- Clinic
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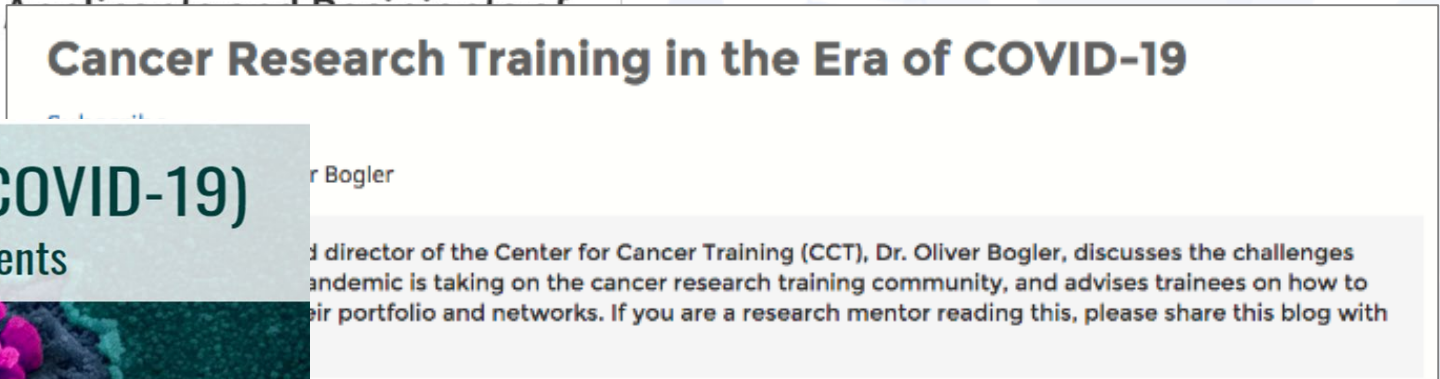
**NIH GRANTS & FUNDING**  
NIH Central Resource for Grants and Funding Information

**Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19):**  
Information for NIH Applicants and Recipients

**NIH Funding**

- [grants.nih.gov](https://grants.nih.gov)
- [grantspolicy@nih.gov](mailto:grantspolicy@nih.gov)
- [cancer.gov/coronavirus-researchers](https://cancer.gov/coronavirus-researchers)

*NCI Bottom Line*



**Cancer Research Training in the Era of COVID-19**

Dr. Oliver Bogler

Dr. Oliver Bogler, director of the Center for Cancer Training (CCT), discusses the challenges the COVID-19 pandemic is taking on the cancer research training community, and advises trainees on how to manage their portfolio and networks. If you are a research mentor reading this, please share this blog with

## CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19) Information for Applicants and Recipients



# NIH Guidance for Grantees

- Extended deadlines for applications, no justification required
- Use of NIH grant funds for salaries and stipends
- Flexibility regarding project extensions and accommodating unanticipated costs
- Extensions of post-award reporting requirements
- Numerous flexibilities regarding expenditures of funds
- Extensions for early stage investigator eligibility due to COVID-19-related disruptions will be considered
- NIH will be flexible with extending time constraints for fellowship, career development, and training awards, including phased awards

# Leadership Update



**Daniel Gallahan, Ph.D.**  
Director, Division of Cancer Biology

# House Appropriations Labor-HHS Subcommittee Hearing FY 2021 NIH Budget Request - March 4, 2020

- Participated alongside Dr. Collins, and IC Directors from NIAID, NHLBI, NIDA, and NICHD
- 8 questions including from the Chair and Ranking Member
- Topics included NCI's increase in applications, CCDI update, clinical trials, and kidney cancer
- Senate budget hearing postponed indefinitely as Congress determines next steps in Appropriations process during COVID-19





# Legislative Updates: Three Aid Packages to Address COVID-19

## Phase 1 (March 3rd)

- \$8.3B in funding for health agencies – vaccine development and testing, plus small business loan subsidies (\$2.2B to CDC, \$836M to NIAID & NIEHS)

## Phase 2 (March 18th)

- \$100B in tax credits for employers offering paid sick leave, increases to unemployment benefits, and food assistance

## Phase 3: CARES Act (March 27th)

- Largest stimulus in U.S. history - \$2 trillion in loans and support for industry and small business
- \$130B in aid for hospitals, doctors, nurses, and health centers
- \$4.3B to CDC, \$945.5M to NIH (NIAID, NHLBI, NIBIB, NCATS, NLM, NIH OD), \$80M to FDA
- Telehealth flexibilities, coverage of diagnostics and preventive services for COVID-19
- Direct payments to individuals, unemployment benefits, student loan deferral, election adjustments

The background of the slide features a complex, abstract network of interconnected nodes and lines, resembling a molecular structure or a data network. The nodes are represented by circles of varying sizes and colors, including shades of blue, green, and yellow. The lines connecting them are thin and light-colored, creating a web-like pattern that fills the right side of the slide.

# Progress in Cancer Research

# CD33 CAR T Trial

*Study of Anti-CD33 Chimeric Antigen Receptor-Expressing T Cells (CD33CART) in Children and Young Adults With Relapsed/Refractory Acute Myeloid Leukemia*

ClinicalTrials.gov Identifier: NCT03971799

Principal Investigators:

- Nirali Shah, MD, MHSc, NCI
- Richard Aplenc, MD, PhD, Children's Hospital of Philadelphia



**Frederick National Laboratory  
for Cancer Research**

*sponsored by the National Cancer Institute*



# Steps per day and all-cause mortality

NCI Press Release

## Higher daily step count linked with lower all-cause mortality

Posted: March 24, 2020

Contact: [NCI Press Office](#)  
240-760-6600

In a new study, higher daily step count was associated with lower mortality from all causes. The research team included investigators from the National Cancer Institute (NCI) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH), both parts of the National Institutes of Health, as well as from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), also found that higher steps a person takes each day and the intensity of stepping, had a lower risk of death with mortality.

The findings were published March 24, 2020, in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*.

**JAMA | Original Investigation**

## Association of Daily Step Count and Step Intensity With Mortality Among US Adults

Pedro F. Saint-Maurice, PhD; Richard P. Troiano, PhD; David R. Bassett Jr, PhD; Barry I. Graubard, PhD; Susan A. Carlson, PhD; Eric J. Shiroma, ScD; Janet E. Fulton, PhD; Charles E. Matthews, PhD

# Selumetinib & NF1

## In NIH trial, selumetinib shrinks tumors, provides clinical benefit for children with NF1

Posted: March 18, 2020

Contact: [NCI Press Office](#)  
240-760-6600

THE NEW ENGLAND JOURNAL of MEDICINE

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

### Selumetinib in Children with Inoperable Plexiform Neurofibromas

A.M. Gross, P.L. Wolters, E. Dombi, A. Baldwin, P. Whitcomb, M.J. Fisher, B. Weiss, A.R. Kim, M. Bornhorst, A.C. Shah, S. Martin, M.C. Roderick, D.C. Pichard, A. Carbonell, S.M. Paul, J. Therrien, O. Kapustina, K. Heisey, D.W. Clapp, C. Zhang, C.J. Peer, W.D. Figg, M. Smith, J. Glod, J.O. Blakeley, S.M. Steinberg, D.J. Venzon, L.A. Doyle, and B.C. Widemann

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Cancer Research  
nstitute (NCI), part

of the National Institutes of Health. Results of the trial were published March 18, 2020, in the *New England Journal of Medicine*.



Dr. Brigitte Widemann with Travis Carpenter, who received selumetinib for NF1 at NIH.  
Credit: National Cancer Institute

# Metabolism & metastasis

[Home](#) > [News & Events](#) > [Cancer Currents Blog](#)

## Changes in Metabolism Help Melanomas Spread

**nature**

Article | Published: 18 December 2019

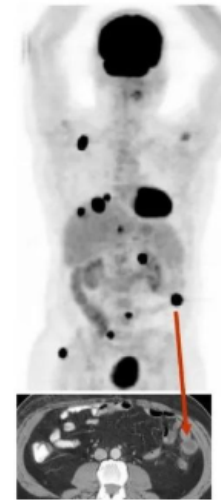
### Metabolic heterogeneity confers differences in melanoma metastatic potential

Alpaslan Tasdogan, Brandon Faubert, Vijayashree Ramesh, Jessalyn M. Ubellacker, Bo Shen, Ashley Solmonson, Malea M. Murphy, Zhimin Gu, Wen Gu, Misty Martin, Stacy Y. Kasitinon, Travis Vandergriff, Thomas P. Mathews, Zhiyu Zhao, Dirk Schadendorf, Ralph J. DeBerardinis ✉ & Sean J. Morrison ✉

skin cancer, can be treated if it's caught early. But once it's spread to other parts of the body, it's highly lethal.

Researchers provide important insights into why some melanomas are more likely to spread, or metastasize, than others. They showed that melanoma cells are more likely to metastasize if they have a higher level of a protein called MCT1.

The ability to take up and use glucose, which increases their energy, is a key factor. This altered metabolism, researchers found, helps melanoma cells survive as they travel to form secondary tumors.



PET/CT scan of a patient with metastatic melanoma.

Credit: J Transl Med. March 2008.

<https://doi.org/10.1186/1479-5876-6-12>. CC BY 4.0.



# Discussion