

Dean's Newsletter

October 26, 2009

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Learning and Knowledge from the East and the West

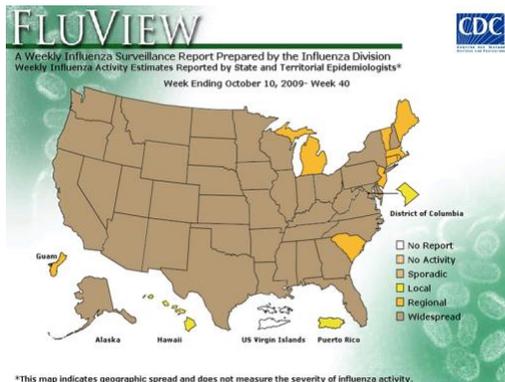
During the past week I have had the chance to view the Li Ka Shing Center for Learning and Knowledge (LKSC) from several perspectives. On October 16th, the LKSC Executive Committee reviewed the latest updates on construction, and I had the opportunity to tour the facility (including the impressive newly planted palm trees that lead from Campus Drive to the entrance) and review progress on the Foundations and Academic Walks, which comprise the accompanying art and history project that will integrate our new medical campus. I also reviewed updated plans with student leaders.

Then, on October 23rd, I met in Hong Kong with Mr. Li Ka Shing to thank him for the gift that will help transform Stanford Medicine. The LKSC is moving rapidly toward completion (see <http://lksc.stanford.edu/>) and will begin hosting selected events in the spring of 2010. We currently anticipate a phased move-in, beginning in March 2010 and extending through the summer. It will be ready for the opening of classes next August, and I am confident that it will more than live up to our hopes of creating a state-of-the-art center for education and learning that also serves as the front door to the medical school. With its completion Stanford Medicine will be the beneficiary of wonderful new resources for students and trainees.

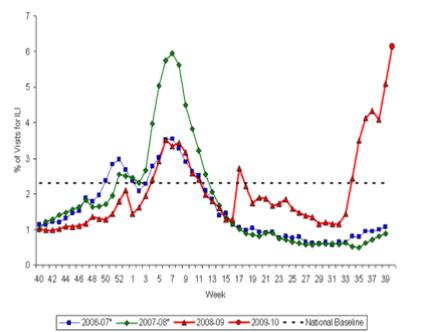
Between the October 16th meeting of LKSC Executive Committee and the October 23rd visit with Mr. Li, I also had the opportunity to visit Shantou University in southern China as well as the Li Ka Shing Medical Faculty of the Hong Kong University. I was joined in the visits by Drs. Charles Prober, Senior Associate Dean for Medical Student Education, and David Gaba, Associate Dean for Immersive and Simulation-Based Learning. We had the opportunity to engage in a dialogue about approaches to medical education and about how the LKSC will contribute to global learning – particularly at Shantou University. As part of our East West Alliance and as an extension of the Stanford Challenge, these evolving global partnerships open new doors for shared learning as well as the generation of new knowledge.

Status on H1N1

H1N1, which now accounts for nearly all cases of flu in the USA, is widespread across 41 states, including California. Of note, the proportion of deaths attributed to pneumonia and influenza has increased and exceeds what is normally expected at this time of year (see CDC figures below). Of particular concern, deaths among children are increasing, even in those without antecedent illness or risk factors. According to the CDC, there have been 86 confirmed pediatric 2009 H1N1 deaths since April; 39 of these have been reported to CDC since August 30, 2009. While the H1N1 nasal spray has



Reported influenza like illnesses



arrived in California, the inactivated vaccine is still not available, although it is expected soon (see: <http://www.cdph.ca.gov/HealthInfo/discond/Pages/H1N1Vaccine.aspx>). As noted in earlier communications, several high risk groups have been identified who should be immunized as soon as the vaccine is available, including:

- Pregnant women
- Persons who live with or provide care for infants aged <6 months (e.g., parents, siblings, and daycare providers)
- Health-care and emergency medical services personnel. As noted in prior communications, the Medical Executive Committees at Stanford Hospital & Clinics and the Lucile Packard Children's Hospital have determined that all medical staff and Advanced Practice Practitioners must be immunized to seasonal influenza and H1N1 unless there is a severe allergy to eggs, prior history of Guillan-Barre syndrome or certain other neuro-degenerative disorders. Failure to comply will result in suspension of medical privileges. Members who feel they have any other compelling reason for exemption should contact the Chief of Staff directly. Dr. Bryan Bohman, Chief of Staff, commented this policy in his October 23rd memorandum to the SHC Medical Staff entitled "*Mandatory Flu Vaccination Policy Announcement.*"
- Persons aged 6 months through 24 years (note that children age 6 months – 9 years should receive two doses of the H1N1 vaccine. Children over 10 years of

age should receive one dose)

- Persons aged 25 through 64 years who have medical conditions that put them at higher risk for influenza-related complications
- While persons over 65 should receive the vaccine, they are not included by CDC in the initial risk group (unless they have co-morbidities) since they are generally expected to have milder disease because of prior exposure and pre-existing antibody to H1N1.

For individuals diagnosed with H1N1, early antiviral intervention with oseltamivir (Tamiflu®) or zanamivir (Relenza®) is important for high-risk groups including:

- Children younger than 2 years old
- Persons aged 65 years or older
- Pregnant women and women up to 2 weeks postpartum (including following pregnancy loss)
- Persons of any age with certain chronic medical or immunosuppressive conditions
- Persons younger than 19 years of age who are receiving long-term aspirin therapy

It is important to remember that we are still very early in the flu-season and that the trends now being observed are concerning – mandating that we do all we can to prevent and treat infection as carefully and well as possible.

Review of the Stanford NCI Cancer Center is Underway

On Thursday, October 15th, more than 30 physicians and scientists from across the nation participated as site visitors in the review of Stanford's 3-year renewal as an NCI designated Cancer Center (see: <http://cancer.stanford.edu/>). Following many months of preparation and weeks of rehearsals, the site visit team listened to reports and updates from leading Stanford faculty about the research and clinical advances that have transpired in the three years since Stanford first achieved designation by the NCI in 2006.

In addition to thanking each of these Stanford leaders I want to specifically acknowledge Dr. Beverly Mitchell, George E. Becker Professor in Medicine and Professor, by courtesy, of Chemical and Systems Biology and Director of the Stanford Cancer Center. Since first joining Stanford as Deputy Director of the Cancer Center and, since August 2008, as Director, Dr. Mitchell has done an outstanding job in leading and directing the Cancer Center. She has worked tirelessly to assemble an outstanding team, create a community of excellence and cancer focus, and bring Stanford to ever higher levels of excellence in cancer-related education, research, patient care, advocacy and community service. Her many contributions were clearly evident during the NCI site visit. I know she has won the respect and confidence of everyone who has worked with her – and I want to add my thanks and appreciation as well.

NIH Director Interviewed by Paul Costello

Paul Costello, Executive Director of Communications and Public Affairs at the School of Medicine, recently interviewed Francis Collins, MD, PhD, who was confirmed and sworn in as Director of the NIH in August 2009. The interview is in the “1:2:1” research and policy podcast series conducted by Paul. The interview with Dr. Collins is timely given the concerns about the level of NIH funding we might see following the end of the ARRA (American Recovery and Reinvestment Act), which will become reality with the FY11 budget. Dr. Collins addresses the NIH budget, his priorities and more in his interview, which is at: <http://med.stanford.edu/121/2009/collins.html> .

2010 Employee of the Year Spirit Awards

In April 2010, the School of Medicine will again award Annual Employee of the Year SPIRIT Awards to two exceptional staff members. The winners will be selected based on outstanding performance, which includes dedication, initiative, motivation, positive attitude and customer service. Staff members must have outstanding performance and have been employed as regular employees, at 50% FTE or more, in one department/unit for the past 2 years. Nominations opened on Monday, October 12th. A special web site has been set up at <http://med.stanford.edu/SPIRIT/>. Please submit your nomination for the person you think should win the SPIRIT Award.

Celebrating Stem Research – and Irv Weissman – at Stanford

Since it was founded at the end of 2002, the Stanford Institute for Stem Cell Biology and Regenerative Medicine has become recognized around the world as one of the leading centers of excellence in this rapidly advancing field. Fueled by support from the California Institute of Regenerative Medicine (CIRM) and soon to be housed in the Lorry Lokey Stem Cell Research Building (Stanford Institutes of Medicine I), the success of the Institute is the work of remarkable faculty and leadership. Among these is Irv Weissman, who has served as Director since the Institute was founded and who, together with an incredible group of colleagues, has made incredible scientific advances that are literally creating new fields of stem cell biology – including areas that have a close association with cancer.

Stem cell biology took a pause recently to recognize and celebrate the 70th birthday of Irv Weissman in a symposium held on Saturday, October 17th. Leaders in stem cell biology and related disciplines traveled from around the world to share ideas, data and celebratory comments and reminiscences about Irv. He has had an integral relationship with Stanford for nearly 50 years, and Irv has helped to shape not only new fields of science but also the medical school that has been so closely aligned with his life and work. Stanford and Irv have a hand in glove relationship, and his reach has encompassed education, research, patient care, mentoring, leadership, good friendship (varyingly mixed with fly fishing, wine and [often unhealthy] food) – with fascinating insights and deep dedication. It was with fondness and great respect that I had the opportunity to join a chorus of Irv admirers from multiple generations of family, friends

and colleagues to say thanks for all he has done and continues to do – and, of course, Happy 70th. We hope this will be a new beginning for Irv and Stanford.

Senior Faculty Transitions

On October 23rd, the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) published an update on faculty age profiles at US medical schools during the past 40 years (from 1967-2007). During this time period, the overall number of faculty has increased from 17,584 to 119,018. Interestingly, the average age of faculty has risen from 41.4 in 1967, to 44.7 in 1987 to 48.5 in 2007 (the last year for which there is complete data). Similarly, the percentage of faculty over 55 years of age increased from 9% in 1967 to 19% in 1987 to 29% in 2007. These findings are consistent with my recent comments on the increasing age of first NIH awards.

There are, of course, multiple ways of viewing these data. On one hand, it is good news that faculty are able to sustain longer productive careers. On the other hand, it is important to consider the implications of a larger number of more senior faculty retiring over a short time period, especially as this would affect the faculty workforce. Regardless, it is important to seek ways to support the career development and longevity of senior as well as junior faculty. This is something we have taken to heart at Stanford with the work of the Senior Transitions Task Force that was led by Dr. Gary Schoolnik which resulted in a website containing information we hope is helpful to our faculty (see: <http://med.stanford.edu/academicaffairs/senior-faculty/>). The AAMC report reminded me to reacquaint you with the information resources the Task Force assembled.

Congratulation to New Members of the Institute Of Medicine

The Institute of Medicine (IOM) of the National Academy of Sciences named 65 new members and five foreign associates on October 12th. Election to IOM is widely considered one of the highest honors in medicine and health and recognizes individuals who demonstrated outstanding achievements. The IOM was established in 1970 and is recognized as a national resource for “independent, scientifically informed analysis and recommendations on health issues.”

Among the 65 new members are five current Stanford Medical School faculty. These include:

Russ Altman, MD, PhD, Professor and Chair, Department of Bioengineering, and Professor of Genetics, Medicine, and Computer Science

Patrick Brown, MD, PhD, Investigator, Howard Hughes Medical Institute; and Professor, Department of Biochemistry

Michael L. Cleary, MD, Lindhard Family Professor in Pediatric Cancer Biology, Departments of Pathology and Pediatrics

Allan L. Reiss, MD, Howard C. Robbins Professor, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, and Director, Center for Interdisciplinary Brain Sciences Research

Lawrence Steinman, M.D., Professor of Neurology, Pediatrics, and Genetics, Department of Neurology and Neurological Sciences

The new members join the 57 existing Stanford faculty who are Members of the IOM. Congratulations to all!

Awards and Honors

- **Scott Delp, PhD**, Professor of Bioengineering and of Mechanical Engineering, and, by courtesy, of Orthopaedic Surgery, and co-director of the Stanford Center for Biomedical Computation, has been appointed as an initial holder of the James H. Clark Professorship in the School of Engineering. The James H. Clark Fund for Bioengineering was established in 1999 to support bioengineering faculty generally, and was previously used to support new faculty in starting up their labs. This is the first time that the fund will be used to support two endowed Professorships; the other is Jim Swartz. Congratulations to Dr. Delp.
- **Tom Krummel**, the Emile Holman Professor and chair of the Department of Surgery, was recently installed as the President of the Halsted Society for the 2010 Society year. This is one of the oldest and most prestigious surgical organizations in the country whose purpose is to further the scientific principles and ideals; to encourage exchange of ideas, free and informal discussion, and a spirit of sociability and good fellowship among its members. Congratulations Dr. Krummel.
- **David Stevenson**, Vice Dean and Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, the Harold K. Faber Professor of Pediatrics and Professor, by courtesy, of Obstetrics and Gynecology, is the 2009 Hewlett Award Recipient and his grand rounds will take place on November 4th titled: “Targeted Chemoprevention of Neonatal Jaundice: Personalizing Medicine for Babies.” Congratulations Dr. Stevenson.

Upcoming Event

**Stanford School of Medicine's Eighth Annual
Fall Forum on Community Health & Public Service**
Tuesday, October 27th
5:30 – 7:30 pm
Frances C. Arrillaga Alumni Center (326 Galvez Street)

Keynote address by *Winston F Wong, MD, MS*, Medical Director for Kaiser Community Benefit and a former Medical Director at Asian Health Services in Oakland. Keynote Title: "Resuscitating the Body Politic." More information can be found at: http://och.stanford.edu/fall_forum.html

Please mark your calendar and plan to join us as we celebrate student contributions to community health through public service and community partnership research. The event is free and open to the public. If you have any questions, please contact Fall Forum coordinators: Dinah Arumainayagam (dinah.arum@gmail.com) and Vinca Chow (vincachow@gmail.com).

Appointments and Promotions

- ***Sanjeev Dutta*** has been promoted to Associate Professor of Surgery and of Pediatrics at the Lucile Salter Packard Children's Hospital, effective 10/01/09.
- ***Michael Kaplan*** has been reappointed to Professor of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery and, by courtesy, of Neurosurgery, at the Stanford University Medical Center, effective 10/01/09.
- ***Lawrence Recht*** has been reappointed to Professor of Neurology and Neurological Sciences and, by courtesy, of Neurosurgery, at the Stanford University Medical Center, effective 10/01/09.