



Intermountain Healthcare participates in NIH Advisory Council for President Obama's Precision Medicine Initiative

Working to build a 1 million patient data cohort to improve personalized care

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH, USA, June 15, 2015 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As part of President Obama's Precision Medicine Initiative (PMI), [Intermountain Healthcare](#) joined a host of experts at the National Institutes of Health's Advisory Council to align healthcare resources to accelerate our understanding of the effect of individual variability on disease prevention and treatment.

The initiative calls for initial funding of \$215 million in the FY2016 budget, with \$130 million of that dedicated to creating a research cohort of at least 1 million participants who will volunteer to share their biological, environmental, lifestyle and behavioral information—plus tissue samples—with medical researchers in a way that protects participant privacy. This data will be linked to the participants' electronic health record (EHR) to allow for phenotypic categorization of health outcomes, resulting in an open resource for any qualified researcher.

Dr. Raj Srivastava, Assistant Vice President of Research, represented Intermountain at the Advisory Council session in Nashville, Tennessee. Others in attendance included broad representation from government (the National Institutes of Health, the White House, the Department of Health and Human Services, and Sen. Lamar Alexander), academic medical centers, major healthcare delivery systems, international and national researchers with cohort expertise, patient advocacy groups, technology groups, and data experts.

Intermountain joined other healthcare delivery systems in a 60 minute panel moderated by Professor Sir Rory Collins, Principal Investigator and Chief Executive of UK Biobank, which has successfully created a half-million person cohort with genomic data and health outcomes data.

"Intermountain Healthcare is already deeply involved in this area in response to our patients and clinicians requesting it, our particular strengths in this area, and our desire to provide excellent medical care based on rigorous science; but in a particularly thoughtful manner for an evolving field," said Dr. Srivastava. "It was clear from the moderator and others that Intermountain is extremely highly regarded in this area and is considered a serious asset to this initiative. Intermountain is well positioned to be considered as a strong partner as the Precision Medicine Initiative unfolds."

Even before the White House announced the PMI, Intermountain leadership approved funding to implement the technical infrastructure required to support the collection and storage of genomic and related data. The PMI repository will serve as a platform for computer application development to advance research analysis and discovery, and for clinical interpretation and molecular medicine decision support.

"The Precision Medicine Initiative's interest in Intermountain Healthcare proves the foresight of the clinicians and administrators who created Intermountain's Clinical Genetics Institute over 10 years ago," said Grant Wood, IT Strategist for the Clinical Genetics Institute at Intermountain Healthcare.

“Our participation in the PMI will go beyond research to benefit clinical genomics, as we will be generating very large genomic data sets that will impact patient care.”

“Establishing a 1 million person cohort is an audacious endeavor,” said NIH Director Francis S. Collins, M.D., Ph.D. “But the results from studying such a large group of Americans will build the scientific evidence necessary for moving precision medicine from concept to reality. I’m confident that we’ve pulled together the best of the best in this working group to put us on the right path forward. And we look forward to broad input from a wide cross-section of stakeholders as this process moves forward.”

About Intermountain Healthcare

Intermountain Healthcare is a Utah-based, not-for-profit system of 22 hospitals, 185 clinics, a Medical Group with some 1,300 employed physicians, a health plans division called SelectHealth, and other health services. Helping people live the healthiest lives possible, Intermountain is widely recognized as a leader in transforming healthcare through high quality and sustainable costs. For more information about Intermountain, visit www.intermountainhealthcare.org.

About the National Institutes of Health (NIH)

NIH, the nation's medical research agency, includes 27 Institutes and Centers and is a component of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. NIH is the primary federal agency conducting and supporting basic, clinical, and translational medical research, and is investigating the causes, treatments, and cures for both common and rare diseases. For more information about NIH and its programs, visit www.nih.gov.

Daron Cowley
Intermountain Healthcare
801-442-2834
email us here

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