



Leaders' Update

A message from Director Gordon Ginder

I am pleased to report that Massey's scientific External Advisory Board (EAB) recently gave an overall positive evaluation of our cancer center at its last meeting. The board met onsite at the beginning of May to conduct a review of the cancer center. The EAB consists of both permanent and ad hoc advisors who periodically review and advise Massey on its research activities and impact in the context of our NCI designation. This group includes 17 cancer scientists and leaders from 15 other NCI-designated cancer centers such as Dana Farber, Mayo Clinic and UNC Lineberger. After hearing and discussing presentations about Massey's programs and shared resources, the EAB gave a positive review of the research activities and trajectory at Massey since our last EAB in January 2014 and our last NCI CCSG (Cancer Center Support Grant, which is the grant that provides NCI designation) review in 2011.

Each scientific program was assessed and specific recommendations were made regarding the areas of focus in order to enhance the potential scoring of the programs in Massey's CCSG renewal application next year. The EAB also voiced agreement with the plans of Massey's senior leadership team in terms of our proposed changes to the scientific programs to reflect the current strengths and interactions among the center's researchers.

The EAB applauded the improvements that have been made in our clinical research infrastructure and encouraged continued active dialogue among leadership at Massey and at the School of Medicine, VCU Health System and the Office of the Vice President for Research to overcome barriers to clinical trial accrual. We were urged to set a realistic but ambitious goal for total clinical trial accrual with an emphasis on investigator-initiated trials based on Massey's science, and we were encouraged to mobilize our clinical research teams and clinicians to meet that goal.

Additionally, the EAB reviewed each of Massey's shared resources and made suggestions as to how to further improve their abilities to facilitate high-quality collaborative research. The group advised us as to which shared resources are most suitable to be included in the CCSG application based on the likelihood of the shared resource being highly rated.

Massey's leadership team was heartened by the review but also motivated to take all of the steps recommended to position our center in the best possible light during the upcoming CCSG renewal in 2016. We are counting on you, our cancer center members, to fully engage in this process to ensure the success of our review. Your help is especially needed in regard to your compliance with the NIH Public Access Policy, correct citation of your Massey Cancer Center shared resource usage and Massey CCSG support in your publications, and acquisition of a PMCID number on all relevant publications.

Instructions regarding the PMCID process are available at

http://publicaccess.nih.gov/submit_process.htm. [Kevin Hogan](#), Ph.D., and [Farah Mirza](#), M.B.A., also are available to assist if you have questions.

In other important news, we are delighted to welcome as the new co-leader of the Cancer Prevention and Control program Dr. Darlene Brunzell, who is a research member in our CPC program and an associate professor in the VCU Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology. She will serve in this capacity alongside Dr. Jennifer Elston Lafata, who has co-led the program since 2010. More information about

this appointment will be announced soon. Please join me in congratulating Dr. Brunzell.

Sincerely,

Gordon D. Ginder, M.D.
Director