

Ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** To request more information on the proposed project or to obtain a copy of the data collection plans and instruments, contact Barbara Wassell, Project Clearance Liaison, Division of Grants Policy, Office of Policy for Extramural Research, NIH, Rockledge II Building, Room 2189, 6701 Rockledge Drive, Bethesda, MD 2089-7730, or call non-toll-free number (301) 435-0937 or E-mail your request, including your address to: <wassellb@odrockml.od.nih.gov>.

**COMMENTS DUE DATE:** Comments regarding this information collection are best assured of having their full effect if received within 60-days of the date of this publication.

Dated: January 23, 1997.

Ruth L. Kirschstein,  
Deputy Director, NIH.  
[FR Doc. 97-2484 Filed 1-30-97; 8:45 am]  
BILLING CODE 4140-01-M

### Consensus Development Conference on Management of Hepatitis C

Notice is hereby given of the NIH Consensus Development Conference on "Management of Hepatitis C," which will be held March 24-26, 1997, in the Natcher Conference Center of the National Institutes of Health, 9000 Rockville Pike, Bethesda, Maryland 20892. The conference begins at 8:30 a.m. on March 24, at 8 a.m. on March 25, and at 9 a.m. on March 26.

The hepatitis C virus (HCV) is a major cause of both acute and chronic hepatitis in the United States. Hepatitis C, previously known as "non-A, non-B hepatitis," affects between 1 and 2 percent of Americans, and chronic infection with HCV is probably the single most important cause of chronic liver disease, cirrhosis, and liver cancer in the Western world. Not all cases of hepatitis C are severe or progressive. Many patients are asymptomatic and are only diagnosed when they are found to have abnormal liver tests following a blood donation or routine evaluation of another problem. Yet, chronic hepatitis C can be insidious and slowly progressive and lead to cirrhosis and liver failure after years or decades of infection.

At present, there are no specific means of prevention of hepatitis C, and

the only therapy of proven benefit is alpha interferon. Interferon treatment, however, is far from satisfactory. Therapy is expensive, often poorly tolerated, and results in a favorable long-term response in only a minority of patients. Given the uncertainties regarding hepatitis C, patients with this disease and their doctors face difficult decisions.

To address the most important and controversial clinical issues in hepatitis C, the NIH has organized this 2½ day conference to bring together national and international experts in the fields of virology, epidemiology, natural history, prevention, and therapy of hepatitis C, as well as representatives from the public.

Following 1½ days of presentations and audience discussion, an independent, non-Federal consensus panel will weigh the scientific evidence and write a draft statement that it will present to the audience on the third day. The consensus statement will address the following key questions:

- What is the natural history of hepatitis C?
- What is the most appropriate approach to diagnose and monitor patients?
- What recommendations can be made to patients to prevent transmission?
- Which patients should be treated?
- What is the most effective approach to therapy?
- What are the most important areas for future research on hepatitis C?

The primary sponsors of this conference are the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases and the NIH Office of Medical Applications of Research. The conference is cosponsored by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases; the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute; the National Institute on Drug Abuse of the National Institutes of Health; and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Advance information on the conference program and conference registration materials may be obtained from Rose Salton, Technical Resources International, Inc., 3202 Tower Oaks Blvd., Suite 200, Rockville, Maryland 20852, (303) 770-3153, or by sending e-mail to confdept@tech-res.com.

The consensus statement will be submitted for publication in professional journals and other publications. In addition, the statement will be available beginning March 24, 1997, from the NIH Consensus Program Information Center, P.O. Box 2577, Kensington, Maryland 20891, phone 1-888-NIH-CONSENSUS (1-888-644-

2667) and from the NIH Consensus Development Program site on the World Wide Web at <http://consensus.nih.gov>.

Dated: January 21, 1997.

Ruth L. Kirschstein,  
Deputy Director, NIH.  
[FR Doc. 97-2483 Filed 1-30-97; 8:45 am]  
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### National Eye Institute; Notice of Closed Meeting

Pursuant to Section 10(d) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, as amended (5 U.S.C. Appendix 2), notice is hereby given of the following National Eye Institute Special Emphasis Panel (SEP) meeting:

*Name of SEP:* Clinical Research.

*Date:* February 27, 1997.

*Time:* 9:00 a.m.

*Place:* National Eye Institute, Executive Plaza South, Suite #350, 6120 Executive Blvd., Bethesda, MD 20892-7164.

*Contact Person:* Andrew P. Mariani, Ph.D., Executive Plaza South, Room 350, 6120 Executive Blvd., Bethesda, MD 20892-7164, (301) 469-5561.

*Purpose/Agenda:* Review of Grant Applications.

The meeting will be closed in accordance with provisions set forth in sections 552b(c)(4) and 552b(c)(6), Title 5, U.S.C. Applications and/or proposals and the discussions could reveal confidential trade secrets or commercial property such as patentable material and personal information concerning individuals associated with the applications and/or proposals, the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program No. 93.867, Vision Research: National Institutes of Health.)

Dated: January 23, 1997.

Paula N. Hayes,  
Acting Committee Management Officer, NIH.  
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### National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute; Notice of Meeting of the Sleep Disorders Research Advisory Board and its Education and Sleep Research Subcommittee

Pursuant to Public Law 92-463, notice is hereby given of the meetings of the Sleep Disorders Research Advisory Board, and its Subcommittees, National Center on Sleep Disorders Research, National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, March 11-12, 1997. These meetings will be held at the National Institutes of Health, Building 31, C Wing, Conference Rooms 6, 7, and 8, respectively, 9000 Rockville Pike, Bethesda, Maryland 20892.