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PR Firm Worked For Tobacco Company And The National Dialogue On Cancer

As the National Dialogue on Cancer takes its first steps as a non-profit organization, it relies on assistance from Edelman, a privately owned multinational public relations firm.

Last October, to get the Dialogue business, Edelman top executives—President and CEO Richard Edelman and founder and Chairman Daniel Edelman—signed a pledge that their companies would no longer serve tobacco clients.

The letter stated that Edelman and StrategyOne, two firms owned by parent company Daniel J. Edelman Inc., will not work with tobacco
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In Brief:

Coltman To Step Down As SWOG Chairman In 2005; Laurence Baker Is Chairman-Elect

CHARLES COLTMAN JR. said he will step down as chairman of the Southwest Oncology Group in 2005, after completing his sixth consecutive four-year term. Coltman, first elected SWOG chairman in 1981, will remain chairman of The Hope Foundation and associate chairman for cancer prevention of SWOG. **LAURENCE BAKER** was elected group chair-elect by the SWOG Board of Governors on July 3. Baker, associate chairman of SWOG since Coltman appointed him to that position in 1981, will become chairman of the group in April 2005. Baker is deputy director and director for clinical research at the University of Michigan Comprehensive Cancer Center in Ann Arbor. He is professor of medicine and associate chief, Division of Hematology/Oncology, at the University of Michigan. He also serves as SWOG principal investigator for the university. The group's operations office will remain in San Antonio, Texas.

... **UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO** Cancer Center received a five-year, \$11 million Specialized Program of Research Excellence grant from NCI for lung cancer. The SPORE has four scientific projects to investigate DNA and gene expression changes as biological markers that would indicate the risk for developing lung cancer. DNA and gene expression abnormalities information could also be used to design chemoprevention and treatment strategies. "The advantage of a SPORE grant is that it brings together a diverse group of investigators to focus on a specific problem," said **Paul Bunn**, principal investigator and director of the UCCC. UCCC will receive \$2.25 million each year for the duration of the grant.

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Edelman Drops Tobacco Account After Press Inquiry

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companies on any business, including marketing, corporate reputation, social responsibility, and research.

This vow notwithstanding, Edelman hasn't been tobacco-free, **The Cancer Letter** has learned.

The Edelman office in Malaysia helped British American Tobacco promote "social reporting," a political process which critics say is designed to preempt global tobacco control measures. An Edelman affiliate continued to represent BAT in Russia, and a recent press release from an affiliate in Poland claimed completion of award-winning projects for Philip Morris Polska and that country's tobacco industry association.

After a reporter brought these projects to the attention of Edelman officials, Leslie Dach, a vice chairman, said the Malaysian projects would be terminated. "I instructed our folks there to resign this project relationship," he said, calling back after taking a few minutes to investigate. "Our policy is that we don't do work for tobacco companies through our companies anywhere in the world, and when we find out that that policy hasn't been followed, we move quickly to correct it."

The following day, Richard Edelman sent a letter to Dialogue activist Peggy Conlon, president and CEO

of the Ad Council, a New York-based non-profit group that produces public service announcements.

"[The] activity by our Malaysian office violates our clear firm-wide policy," Edelman wrote in the letter dated July 23. "I was unaware of this activity in Malaysia, and we have instructed the Malaysian and Asian operations to resign the client. We take our commitments seriously. This should not have occurred, and we are issuing a firm-wide reminder of our policy. In addition, we will be taking all fees from this activity and donating them to charity."

However, nothing can be done about the Warsaw and Moscow affiliates, Edelman executive Dach said to **The Cancer Letter**.

"They are independently governed companies," he said. "We don't control their policies. They are affiliate companies, which means that we at times use them in their countries to help us implement projects." The company's Web site lists 39 offices and 37 affiliates around the world.

Conlon, who is a member of the Dialogue board and head of its communications committee, applauded Edelman's actions. "If anything has happened in Malaysia or some place on the other side of the world, I am confident that they didn't know about it," she said. Conlon accepted Edelman's explanation that the work of affiliates is beyond the company's control. "If you don't own the company, how can you force them to resign business?" she said.

Conlon described Edelman's no-tobacco pledge as a dramatic conversion. "I am impressed by people who are willing to set aside the profit motive," she said. "There is a culture there that wants to do everything they can to improve the health of the country."

Last fall, when Conlon's Dialogue communications group recommended Edelman for the job, tobacco control experts noted the company's work for tobacco clients. At that time, an Edelman-owned company in the U.S. worked for Altria Group Inc., the parent company of Kraft Foods, Philip Morris International, Philip Morris USA, and Philip Morris Capital Corp.

Confronted, Edelman officials said they would drop Altria and any other clients involved in the tobacco business. "They came back and said, 'We'll resign that business, and you have our full assurances that if you give us the business, we will take no tobacco assignments,'" Conlon said.

Stanton Glantz, an antismoking activist, professor of medicine, and director of the Center for



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Tobacco Control Research and Education at the University of California at San Francisco, said Edelman's 50-year history of service to tobacco companies makes it a bad hire for managing public relations of an organization promoting tobacco control.

"I think it just shows that they are not serious," Glantz said of the Dialogue. "The great care that smart people take to avoid such situations isn't just an ethical statement. It's also a very practical programmatic statement. You don't want [information] leaking out. It's like the CIA hiring the KGB to do their intelligence work for them, or Bush hiring Al Qaeda to do PR, because they have good connections to Al-Jazeera. It's just amazing, absolutely amazing to me."

Centralized Global Billing

A former Edelman official familiar with accounting practices said that several years ago, the company set up a central billing system that required that all offices around the world create billing codes for all their accounts.

"Edelman utilizes a centralized global billing system managed from their Chicago office by their Chief Financial Officer," the executive said. "To suggest that the leadership of the firm, who review the financials on a monthly basis, doesn't understand what BAT stands for is ludicrous."

Sources said Edelman has a variety of relationships with affiliates, ranging from equity partnerships to commercial relationships.

"Edelman suggests that they are unwilling to attempt to limit the activities of affiliates on behalf of tobacco companies, which can be simply done," said a former executive. "Edelman should refuse to work with any firm not prepared to take a similar anti-tobacco stance. The global commitment Edelman made to change 50 years of pro-tobacco advocacy was obviously not taken seriously enough to drive accountability through the firm."

Many public relations firms create multi-track systems, where purportedly separate units accept tobacco business, allowing the main corporate entity to maintain a no-tobacco appearance.

Dach said he didn't know how the Malaysian tobacco account slipped through the system. "It's not clear to me," he said. "And that's, in a sense, not important to us insofar that it shouldn't have happened, and it's very clear that it will not happen."

The company will not use its affiliates to hide tobacco relationships, Dach said. "We have a very

clear policy that no Daniel J. Edelman company will work with tobacco companies on any business. We cannot control what our affiliates do. We derive no financial benefit from their clients, and our people will not work, and do not work, on these matters under these policies."

If an affiliate attempts to refer work related to a tobacco account to an Edelman office, the company will decline, Dach said.

"If they asked us to work on this, we'd say 'No.'"

Defining A Tobacco Company

The relationship between the Dialogue and Edelman raises questions of definitions of a tobacco company.

To get the Dialogue business, Edelman dropped the Altria account. "We were doing some research work, not for the tobacco company, but at the Altria level—for Altria—and we terminated that," Dach said.

However, the public relations firm continues to represent Kraft, a separately-traded company owned by Altria. "Kraft is a food company, obviously," said Dach said. "I don't comment on my clients' ownership, but Kraft is obviously a food company."

Edelman's client roster also includes the American Council for Fitness and Nutrition, a coalition that includes Kraft and other food and beverage makers who united late last year to counter the federal government's campaign against obesity. In addition to facing the prospect of regulation, the industry is becoming a target of lawsuits similar to those that have set back the U.S. tobacco industry.

Through ACFN, food companies deliver a message that echoes the "personal responsibility" campaigns of the tobacco firms. Instead of saying, "Eat less," the industry suggests that Americans take responsibility for their health, learn about nutrition, exercise, and keep their children trim.

"Staying healthy, active and well nourished is a lifestyle decision," the industry coalition states on its Web site, www.acfn.org. "Though it seems complex, the equation is simple—we all need to incorporate enough activity into our daily routine to utilize the calories we consume."

The very people who inflate the size of food portions are promoting moderation, said Marion Nestle, chairman of the New York University Department of Nutrition, Food Studies and Public Health and author of "Food Politics; How the Food



Industry Influences Nutrition and Health,” a recently published book about the causes of the obesity epidemic.

“On the one hand, they are selling food in larger portions, and on the other hand, they are trying to do something about it,” Nestle said to **The Cancer Letter**. “Well, I don’t know how that meshes. Exercise is wonderful; I am totally for it. It’s just that it’s not going to solve the obesity epidemic alone. It’s not possible to lose weight if you don’t eat less.”

NCI Director Andrew von Eschenbach speaks often about the relationship between diet and cancer, suggesting it as an area of collaboration between the Institute and FDA. “With regard to diet, there are extraordinary needs and opportunities,” he said at the annual meeting of the American Society for Clinical Oncology last May. “Diet is an issue that for us—even from HHS—has become a major strategic initiative, because of the epidemic of obesity...

“As we look at diet, and as we look at the need to further develop the science of understanding dietary factors and micronutrients, we also need to be working collaboratively and cooperatively with FDA in terms of how to validate the impact in a way that they can make recommendations with regard to dietary guidelines,” von Eschenbach said (**The Cancer Letter**, June 6).

Edelman official Dach said his company is able to represent the Dialogue and ACFN. “I don’t think there is any sense that representation of food companies and representation of those who care about improving the lives of those with cancer is a conflict,” he said.

The food companies aren’t a conflict, Conlon agreed. “In my mind, that whole initiative, as I understand it, is to promote healthy lifestyles. Gosh, I sure hope that the food industry isn’t the new enemy, because I love eating.”

NCI Director von Eschenbach, who is also the vice-chairman of the Dialogue board, was unavailable to discuss the hiring of Edelman. “He is not going to be back in the office till the first week in August,” said Dorie Hightower, an NCI press officer. “Why are you assuming that he would have the ultimate decision on the PR firm that they hire?”

The Dialogue first announced the hiring of Edelman last December, www.ndoc.org/ah_2002_c.html.

Conlon declined to discuss the monetary value of the Dialogue contract with Edelman. “The amount of services they are providing for NDC is nowhere

near what we would pay if we were paying as a for-profit client,” she said. “They definitely have given us pro bono consideration, and they are going well beyond what anyone would expect them to do.”

Last month, the Dialogue’s newsletter reported that, “in early 2004, a [Dialogue-sponsored] public service advertising campaign will commence,” www.ndoc.org/newsflash/index.htm.

The message of that campaign is yet to be determined, Conlon said. “We haven’t even framed what the specific message would be, and that would be for the board to decide at a later date,” she said. “It could be prevention. It could be detection. That’s really something that will serve up some topics for discussion and debate.”

Dialogue Puts Edelman In Cancer Policymaking

Over its four-year history, the Dialogue has met behind closed doors, advancing fundamental legislative and regulatory changes in cancer research and cancer care. After one of its founders, the urologist von Eschenbach, became the NCI director, the Dialogue has become something of a hatchery of ideas for the Institute.

Having landed the Dialogue account, Edelman finds itself squarely in the center of cancer policymaking, working shoulder-to-shoulder with NCI officials, cancer researchers, and cancer professional societies.

Consider the recent Dialogue announcement of a plan to create a tumor bank for genomic research (**The Cancer Letter**, July 18). The day before the announcement at the annual meeting of the American Association for Cancer Research, an NCI staff member sent this email to the outside experts who were working on the Dialogue project:

“If you are agreeable, and there is sufficient press interest, we would like you to serve as spokesperson for the project. Jennifer Mallory from Edelman (cced above) will be organizing the press interviews over the weekend at AACR. Typically, such interviews are conducted over the phone, and take approximately 20-30 minutes to complete. If you are willing to serve as a spokesperson for the project, and have not done so already, could you please forward Jennifer and me your cell phone number? Jennifer will contact you over the weekend to provide you with more information about how the interview process will operate.”

The press release distributed at the AACR annual meeting cites Mallory as the contact, without



mentioning her affiliation with Edelman.

Public relations firms seek out conflict of interest, said Sheldon Rampton, editor of PR Watch, a publication of the Center for Media & Democracy of Madison, Wisc. "It's a classic maneuver on their part to place themselves at the locus of conflict of interest," Rampton said. "It's precisely there that action is happening, in terms of being able to influence things."

The Dialogue is a dream client for Edelman, said Rampton, co-author of "Toxic Sludge Is Good for You!" and other books about the industry.

"They basically placed a spy in the nerve center of central command of the war on cancer," he said. "It's a good thing for them, because, first of all, they get advance warning. That's invaluable. Secondly, they have the opportunity to get things cut off at the pass, to nudge people in subtle directions: to say, 'Why don't we focus on this, because this is doable, as opposed to that, which is not.' They can have a lot of influence at setting the agenda on obesity and tobacco in ways that the public at large may never see, because the decisions and the language, and the best experts will have been selected in consultation with Edelman at a point before the public is part of the dialogue."

Edelman's track record of representing tobacco companies is well known. In 2000, the American Cancer Society, the group that launched and initially bankrolled the Dialogue, declined to renew Edelman's contract after **The Cancer Letter** reported that the firm handled press relations for Team KOOL Green, which competes on the Championship Auto Racing Teams circuit.

For ACS, Edelman ran a voter education campaign, placing advertisements in conjunction with the Iowa caucus and the New Hampshire primary. For Brown and Williamson Tobacco Corp., a subsidiary of British American Tobacco and the maker of KOOL cigarettes, the company operated a 45-foot-long "mobile media coach" that served as a press center for the Indianapolis-based team.

At the time, Edelman officials said the company was not "engaged in public affairs on behalf of the tobacco industry in the U.S.," adding that the Team KOOL Green relationship involved auto racing and was made by a Canadian office (**The Cancer Letter**, Jan. 21, 2000). Edelman has done no work for ACS since, said Greg Donaldson, the society spokesman.

The Edelman revelation was the second embarrassment for ACS. At the same time, the

society dismissed Shandwick International, the public relations firm that designed and framed the Dialogue, while also representing R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Holdings (**The Cancer Letter**, Jan. 28, 2000).

Edelman currently represents teams on the Winston cup circuit of the National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing. The firm's top entertainment official, Peter Land, lists NASCAR as a client. Land, executive vice president and general manager for sports and entertainment marketing, didn't return calls from a reporter.

Winston Cup, scheduled to be renamed Nextel Cup during the 2004 season, is watched by 75 million people, an audience that makes it second only to the National Football League. According to NASCAR, its fans are three times more likely to buy a product marketed by a sponsor than by a non-sponsor. In recent past, Edelman also handled press relations for the Formula One Lucky Strikes Honda team.

At the same time, the agency pursued the health business, serving pharmaceutical companies and health groups. Also, Richard Edelman is a member of the board of the CDC Foundation, a non-profit group that develops partnerships between Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and others entities.

Social Reporting: The Other Dialogue

On June 13, Edelman issued a press release about scholarships for children of tobacco farmers and curers on behalf of BAT Malaysia: www.batmalaysia.com/CorporateInformation/PressRelease/index.htm.

The document left no doubt about authorship: "Issued on behalf of BAT Malaysia... by Edelman Public Relations Worldwide." Phone calls were answered at the local Edelman office, and the contact on the press release confirmed that Edelman represented BAT.

"We work with BAT off an on... specifically on the community relations and on the social reporting front," said Andy See, an Edelman employee, one of the contacts on the press release.

"Social reporting" is a curious creation of the modern public relations industry, a purportedly open "dialogue" with "stakeholders."

"It's about being responsive to the needs of the stakeholders," See explained to **The Cancer Letter**. Critics describe this process as an effort by BAT to thwart the World Health Organization's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control.

The BAT strategy involves convincing its



opponents and sundry others “to join it in dialogue,” wrote Bob Burton and Andy Rowell in PR Watch. A respected political or cultural figure in every BAT territory is found to lead the dialogue, which culminates in production of yearly “social reports.”

“BAT coaxed journalists, health advocates, tobacco control activists and government officials to participate in meetings whose purported mission was to advise the company on how to become a responsible corporate citizen,” Burton and Rowell wrote.

The word “dialogue” figures prominently in the language of social reporting.

“At British American Tobacco, we acknowledge that our products are risky, and we recognize the significant responsibilities of our business,” said BAT Malaysia in its statement on social responsibility.

“We also believe that a company like ours, with a century’s experience of operating in diverse global cultures, which knows our products and its science, supports sensible regulation, and has a long track record of cooperation with governments worldwide, can make a real contribution to progress in reducing the health impact of tobacco,” the statement reads. “Our goal is to seek solutions through dialogue with a wide range of our stakeholders. We see this as a better alternative to conflicts and stalemates which can often characterize debates on tobacco issues.”

“A Bold Stroke To Capture People’s Attention”

Internal tobacco industry documents show that Shandwick—the public relations firm that also designed the National Dialogue on Cancer for the American Cancer Society—worked on the Framework Convention for BAT and designed the company’s social reporting process.

The documents, obtained from the Minnesota Tobacco Document Depository, which was established as a result of that state’s lawsuit against tobacco companies, include a copy of Shandwick’s February 2000 presentation to BAT.

One of the opening slides in the presentation describes BAT’s predicament:

- “No trust among stakeholders—legislators and their key influencers.
- “People do not believe you mean what you say, you say one thing and do another e.g. smuggling, attacking the ad ban, high tar products in the developing world.
- “Seen as part of ‘Big Tobacco’ conspiracy.”
What would be required for BAT to get out of

that predicament? Another Shandwick slide offered the answer:

- “To take the lead.
- “Rebuild reputation and restock the ‘reputation reservoir.’
- “Say what you mean, mean what you say.
- “Establish a *baseline of belief*, win acceptance for it, draw a line and move forward (dialogue, partnership)...
- “Identify pragmatic forces in the debate and build bridges...
- “A bold stroke to capture people’s attention, get taken seriously, win a part in the debate.”

Shandwick recommended that BAT “commit money to additional investment [in] safer product research,” drop billboard advertising, “commit finance to initiating wider public debate on 18 age limit,” and stop sponsorship of Formula One racing.

By the time Shandwick prepared the presentation to BAT, it had spent years covertly representing tobacco companies in controlling the spin from litigation, newly released documents show.

Though ACS fired Shandwick after **The Cancer Letter** reported the firm’s involvement in tobacco, the cancer dialogue endured, evolving on a separate track from the BAT dialogues.

Shandwick and ACS installed prominent third parties—former President George Bush, his wife Barbara Bush, and Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-CA)—as leaders of the organization.

The group’s first meeting was held in the George Bush Presidential Library and Museum in November 1998. Soon after it was launched, the ACS dialogue spun off the Cancer Legislation Advisory Committee, a group that was given the task of designing a new version of the National Cancer Act, which is currently being proposed as legislation by Dialogue co-chairman Feinstein.

The Dialogue seeks to broaden the focus of the cancer program beyond cancer research, expanding the role of cancer prevention, control, and care. While scientists argued that existing interventions aren’t effective enough to justify refocusing the cancer program, the Dialogue enthusiasts have prevailed (**The Cancer Letter**, Sept. 22, 2000).

Now, the Dialogue is proposing programs and policies for NCI and other government agencies, applauding von Eschenbach’s pledge to “end suffering and death due to cancer” in the next 12 years—and raising money. The organization has \$21 million in pledges and contributions.



Nicotine: “A Naturally-Occurring Substance”

According the Burton and Rowell, BAT’s first Malaysian social report described nicotine as “a naturally-occurring substance in the tobacco plant which is thought to have a mild stimulant effect.”

The report also noted that tar produced by burning tobacco “is thought to be related to some of the health risks associated with smoking.” The story is posted at www.prwatch.org/prwissues/2002Q4/bat.html.

In Malaysia, the social reporting meetings were organized internally by BAT, and Edelman’s role was to “conduct private briefings for selected groups of people, and press briefings,” Edelman employee See said to **The Cancer Letter**.

Also, Edelman wrote the press releases that accompany the BAT reports, See said.

Meanwhile, in Moscow, Imageland Public Relations, an Edelman affiliate, is working on brand development of BAT cigarettes.

“We are working on a specific brand,” Olga Naumova, an agency employee, said to **The Cancer Letter**. The company is preparing to re-launch *Yava Zolotaya*, Yava Gold, an updated version of one of the Soviet-era cigarettes. “It’s a local product for the Russian market,” Naumova said.

Imageland has performed other tasks for BAT Russia. These included corporate relations projects and public relations for three BAT-sponsored exhibits: women artists in the Russian avant-garde art, the modernist art of Kazimir Malevich, and the works of his followers.

According to an Imageland press release about the women of the avant-garde exhibit, “the Russian public was able to see the paintings of their famous compatriots in large part because of sponsorship by British American Tobacco Russia, which is continuing the glorious Russian tradition of sponsorship of the arts.”

Imageland became an exclusive official representative of Edelman four years ago. According to a press release, it has “access to huge information resources and diverse experience of the global network,” and its employees are able “to take internship with many U.S. and European offices of Edelman, as well as leverage their expertise during the annual educational programs by Edelman University Summer School.”

The company’s Web site displays the Edelman affiliate logo: www.imageland.ru/eng/agency/edelman.html.

Another Edelman affiliate, Business Communications Associates S.A. of Warsaw, stated in a May 12 press release that it has completed award-winning projects for Philip Morris Polska and the Polish National Association of Tobacco Industry http://newsroom.bca.com.pl/notatka_3565.html.

Several Dialogue members said they are watching the Edelman controversy closely.

“We engaged in a partnership to provide funds to the National Dialogue on Cancer, because we want them to move this issue of tobacco much higher up on their agenda, because it is the cause of one-third of all cancer,” said Cheryl Heaton, president and CEO of the American Legacy Foundation, and a Dialogue participant.

The foundation, established with the proceeds from the Master Settlement Agreement between state attorneys general and the tobacco companies, committed \$3 million to the Dialogue over the next three years.

“The foundation works very hard to limit to the maximum extent possible the placement of our dollars with tobacco dollars,” Heaton said to **The Cancer Letter**. “To that end, we received two assurances from the National Dialogue on Cancer. The first was that the National Dialogue Foundation, once it accepted our money, would accept no money from tobacco companies or their subsidiaries. And second, that the PR firm in service to the foundation had relinquished all ties to tobacco industry clients. It is on that basis that we moved forward with them.

“Our money cannot be commingled with tobacco money.”

Funding Opportunities: **Program Announcement**

PAR-03-148: Cancer Education and Career Development Program

The purpose of NCI Cancer Education and Career Development Program (R25) is to train predoctoral and postdoctoral candidates in cancer research settings that are highly inter-disciplinary and collaborative. This program requires sustained leadership, dedicated faculty time, specialized curriculum development and implementation, interdisciplinary research environments, and more than one mentor per trainee to achieve career development research and education objectives. Full text of the PA is available at <http://grants1.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PAR-03-148.html>.

Inquiries: Maria Agelli, NCI, Cancer Training Branch, 6116 Executive Blvd., Suite 700, Bethesda, MD 20892, phone 301-496-8580; e-mail ma215e@nih.gov.



Letter to the Editors:
**Groups Need Trial Prioritization,
Stringent Review, NCI Says**

To the Editors:

The story, "Group Chairmen Point to NCI as Source of Problems" (**The Cancer Letter**, July 11), reported that the Institute reserves the right to approve every cooperative group study. That is technically correct, but ignored the fact that most trials employ NCI-sponsored investigational agents, for which review and ongoing oversight are regulatory requirements that cannot be waived.

For the remaining large randomized trials, the key consideration is that each of these typically represents expenditure of several million dollars of public funds, and the funding pool has not been freely expandable. Few, if any, of these trials will have had, prior to launching, detailed review by NCI's Subcommittee H or any other peer review entity that meets the usual NIH standard of minimal conflict of interest.

Prioritizing studies within each organ-site committee in each group is simply not equivalent. It's not evident to many outside the groups why large phase III trials should have much less stringent evaluation than is typical for even smaller scale research projects of all types. It has also not been easy to identify a less conflicted, less cumbersome, or more rapid review mechanism than the CTEP Protocol Review Committee, which meets weekly.

NCI program staff did not oppose CALGB's proposal for raising the per-case reimbursement into the range of \$3,600. Staff asked each of the groups in their recent competitive renewals to propose, and provide justification for, their best estimates of the actual per-case costs of accrual, rather than adopting the current \$2,000 as a fixed rate. Each group was informed that current budget levels would not be expected to make a higher level possible right now, but that peer review approval and recommendation of a higher level would provide additional strength to the case for a future increase. Program staff fully support the goal of realistically reimbursing the actual costs of enrolling patients in clinical trials.

It is to that end that we discussed with the group chairs the notion that when the overall budget is constrained, a higher level of reimbursement could still be achieved by means of more effective prioritization, not only within each group, but across the system. This would require a collective decision

to launch fewer trials, but the very best ones. For this, though, a trial-by-trial review mechanism remains unavoidable.

Richard Kaplan
Chief, NCI Clinical Investigations Branch

In Brief:
**NMA Begins Prostate Cancer
Ads Aimed At Black Men**

(Continued from page 1)

The SPORC involves researchers from the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center and the Denver Veterans Affairs Medical Center. . . . **NATIONAL MEDICAL ASSOCIATION** is focusing on prostate health disparities as it kicks off a national awareness program on health disparities affecting African Americans, said NMA President **L. Natalie Carroll**. The organization will sponsor radio public service announcements featuring former HHS Secretary **Louis Sullivan** to increase awareness of prostate disease, including prostate cancer, BPH and prostatitis, among African-American men age 45 and older. The mortality rate of prostate cancer in African-American men in the U.S. is more than two times the mortality for white men, the association said. "We need to ensure that men over 45 get annual prostate exams because of the health and social ramifications of this disease," Carroll said. NMA represents more than 25,000 African-American physicians. . . . **CITY OF HOPE CANCER CENTER** was awarded a \$1,357,100 grant from NCI to lead "Oncology Nursing Education in End-of-Life Care," a five-year training project to improve end-of-life care for cancer patients. . . . **E. CHESTER RIDGWAY**, head of the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center Division of Endocrinology, Metabolism and Diabetes, and member of the University of Colorado Cancer Center was elected president of the Endocrine Society for 2003-2004. Ridgway is senior associate dean of the CU School of Medicine. . . . **DANIEL VASELLA**, chairman and CEO of Novartis AG, was presented the CancerCare Human Services Award June 12 in New York. Also honored were **Jane Brody**, personal health columnist of The New York Times, and **Dana Buchman**, designer. . . . **BRUCE CHESON**, professor of medicine, head of hematology, and director of hematology research at Lombardi Cancer Center, was named chairman of the Cancer and Leukemia Group B Lymphoma Committee.



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