

May 2015 Newsletter

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A New Era Begins: Alpha Stem Cell Clinic Network Holds Inaugural Meeting



April 23rd marked the inaugural meeting of the Alpha Stem Cell Clinic network at City of Hope in Duarte, CA. This CIRM-funded program aims to create one-stop centers for clinical trials enabling patients to have safe, fast and easy access to life-saving or life-changing stem cell therapies. In addition to City of Hope, UCLA, UCI and UCSD are also partners in this endeavor. These medical centers will not only have the clinical and regulatory expertise needed to deliver what, in many cases, will be the first-in-human clinical trials, but will also have the trained personnel, state of the art facilities, patient care coordination and long-term follow-up that these therapies need. Key members of each center attended the meeting to discuss how to achieve the network's unifying goal: to accelerate the development and delivery of stem cell therapies to patients.

- [Read our blog about the meeting](#)
- [Learn more at our Alpha Clinics web page](#)

CIRM 2.0 Grant Reviewers Hold 1st In-Person Review, Chart a Faster Way to Help Patients

CIRM 2.0

CALIFORNIA'S STEM CELL AGENCY

On April 27th CIRM's Grants Working Group (GWG), the out-of-state, independent panel of experts that review all the applications for agency funding, got their first chance to meet in person since the launch of CIRM 2.0, a new streamlined funding process that aims to produce a more effective and efficient way to deliver stem cell therapies to patients with unmet medical needs. In addition to voting on the latest round of 2.0 applications, the GWG devoted part of the day to an in-depth discussion of the 2.0 process and its radical departure from the old application review system. Those in attendance were very impressed with the meaningful dialogue including Sen. Art Torres, the Vice Chair and a Patient Advocate member of our governing Board: "Yesterday was a historic day for CIRM. It was one of the best meetings I have attended and gave me renewed confidence in speaking to the public of how we continue to be responsible stewards of the taxpayers' dollars while at the same time keeping patients as our number one priority."

- [Read our blog about the review session](#)
- [Learn more about CIRM 2.0](#)

Cirmtuzumab, a Cancer Drug Named after CIRM, Featured in TV News Report



In April, a CIRM-funded clinical trial led by Thomas Kipps of UC San Diego's Moores Cancer Center was featured by Ivanhoe Broadcasting, a company that syndicates medical stories to TV stations around the US. The trial is testing a drug to treat chronic lymphocytic leukemia, a deadly blood cancer. The UCSD team chose to name the drug cirmtuzumab, in honor of CIRM.

- [Watch the TV news story](#)
- [Read our blog about cirmtuzumab](#)

International Stem Cell Group Offers Much Needed Guidance for Patients

A Closer Look at Stem Cells

Learn about stem cell research and its potential to impact human health.

In April, the International Society for Stem Cell Research (ISSCR) launched an expanded and redesigned version of their educational website, A Closer Look at Stem Cells, which was created out of concern that some stem cell treatments are being marketed by clinics around the world without appropriate oversight and patient protections in place. The new site makes navigation to key information easier. For instance, the home page prominently displays "Nine Things to Know about Stem Cell Treatments". The site is also the new home of ISSCR's blog, Stem Cells in Focus.

- Read our blog about ISSCR's expanded web site
- Visit A Closer Look at Stem Cells

The Latest Publications by CIRM-Funded Researchers

CIRM grantees are making steady progress on understanding the fundamentals of stem cell biology and moving stem cell-based therapies toward clinical trials. Here's an example of CIRM-funded research that was published in March along with press releases from the grantees' home institutions and entries from *The Stem Cellar*, CIRM's official blog:

April 2nd - *Nature*

- Stanford Release: Researchers identify 'bridge' state necessary for cellular reprogramming
- CIRM Blog: Stem cell stories that caught our eye: wonkish revelation on cellular reprogramming

April 6th - *Stem Cell Reports*

- Buck Institute Release: Mitochondria are altered in human cell model of Parkinson's disease
- CIRM Blog: Mutation Morphs Mitochondria in Models of Parkinson's Disease, CIRM-Funded Study Finds

April 14th - *Nature Communications*

- UCLA Release: UCLA stem cell scientists go out on a limb for motor neuron disease
- CIRM Blog: CIRM-Funded Scientists Build a Better Neuron; Gain New Insight into Motor Neuron Disease

April 16th - *Science*

- Stanford Release: Cell type responsible for scarring, skin-cancer growth identified
- CIRM Blog: Molecular Trick Diminishes Appearance of Scars, Stanford Study Finds

April 17th - *PLoS Genetics*

- USC Release: Hearing loss from noise may be in the genes
- CIRM Blog: Stem cell stories that caught our eye: genetic link to hearing loss

April 21st - *Nature*

- Stanford Release: Viral proteins may regulate human embryonic development
- CIRM Blog: Stem cell stories that caught our eye: virus genes in embryos

April 23rd - *Cell*

- Stanford Release: Brain tumor growth stimulated by nerve activity in the cortex, Stanford study finds
- CIRM Blog: Brain's Own Activity Can Fuel Growth of Deadly Brain Tumors, CIRM-Funded Study Finds

April 23rd - Cell Reports

- UCSF Release: Evolution of stem cells traced in study of fossilized rodent teeth
- CIRM Blog: Scientists Sink their Teeth into Stem Cell Evolution

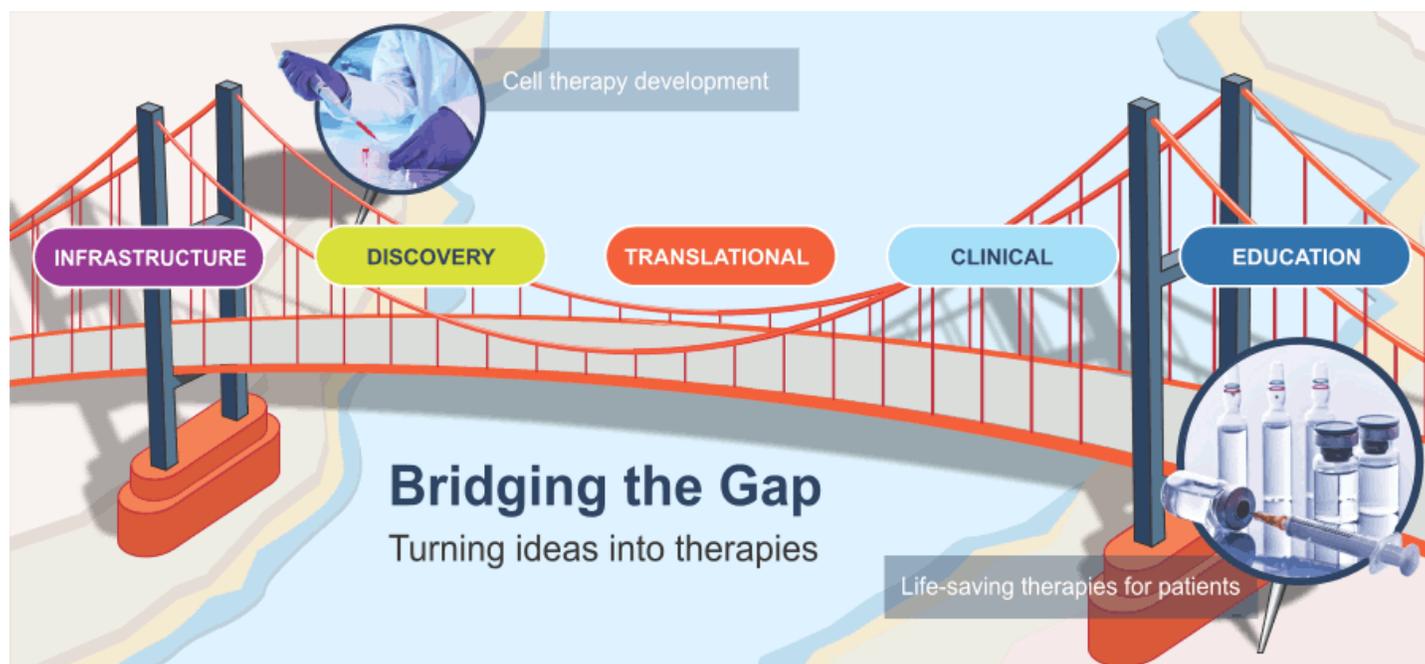
Upcoming CIRM Events

May 21st

The CIRM governing Board will hold its third meeting of 2015 on May 21st at the Claremont Hotel in Berkeley, CA. The agenda and details will be posted to the **meetings page** 10 days before the event.

Please note that this meeting was originally scheduled to be held in San Diego. The September 24th meeting will be held in San Diego.

CIRM 2.0 Funding Opportunities



CIRM will accept applications on a monthly basis applications for our three Clinical Stage Programs described in the Program Announcements listed below:

- PA 15-01: Partnering opportunity for late stage preclinical projects
- PA 15-02: Partnering opportunity for clinical trial stage projects
- PA 15-03: Partnering opportunity for supplemental accelerating activities

To submit an application, visit our CIRM 2.0 awards page for more information. Our Discovery and Translational Stage Programs will be announced later this year.

Sign up to receive CIRM funding announcements

CIRM Job Openings

The following positions are now open. Follow the links below to apply or go to our jobs page:

- Project Manager, Clinical Advisory Panels
- Science Officer, Discovery Team
- Grants Management Specialist
- Director/Senior Director, Organ Systems Therapeutic Area
- Director/Senior Director, Neuro/Ocular Therapeutic Area
- Director/Senior Director, Blood and Cancer Therapeutic Area

Source URL: <https://www.cirm.ca.gov/about-cirm/newsletter/may-2015-newsletter>