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Contact: Donna Krupa
703.527.7357 (office)
703.967.2751 (cell)
djkrupa1@aol.com

LEADING SCIENTIFIC & MEDICAL ORGANIZATIONS OFFER THE NIH DIRECT LINKS TO THEIR JOURNALS TO MAKE IT EASY FOR THE PUBLIC TO ACCESS RESEARCH

(October 25, 2005) – Rockville, MD – Fifty-seven of the nation’s leading medical and scientific nonprofit publishers today announced they have offered a proposal to Elias Zerhouni, M.D., director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), that would allow the NIH to bring vast amounts of research findings to the public efficiently and at no cost.

In a joint letter to Dr. Zerhouni, the group detailed a plan that would allow the NIH to provide online access to articles on their journal websites using the existing system of links from abstracts that are indexed on NIH’s Medline. The transparent linking system would make it easier for the public to view more than 1 million research articles and would avert the need to create a new taxpayer-funded publishing infrastructure within the NIH.

The public-private partnership being proposed by the non-profit publishers would fulfill the NIH’s goal to provide complete public access to all NIH-funded research. It also would allow seamless online access to a staggering amount of additional scientific and medical research, including 1 million free research articles from science, social sciences and the humanities, more than 15,000 additional free articles each month, and a library of 1.7 million full-text research articles dating to 1849.

“Overnight and at no cost to taxpayers, this proposal will make it easy for the public to access vast amounts of the most accurate scientific and medical information available,” said Chris Lynch, vice president of publishing for the Massachusetts Medical Society, which publishes the *New England Journal of Medicine*. “Essentially, what we are proposing is for the NIH to become the public’s doorway into the universe of research that non-profit publishers already provide to the public everyday.”

The proposal was conceived, in part, in response to the NIH’s implementation of its “*Policy on Enhancing Public Access to Archived Publications Resulting from NIH Funded Research*” on May 2, 2005. The policy requests NIH grantees submit to the NIH any manuscripts that report on NIH-funded research. The voluntary program asks participating researchers to submit their



manuscripts to the agency after they have been peer reviewed and accepted for publication, but before they have undergone final copyediting.

The publishers' proposal to Dr. Zerhouni eliminates concerns that placing research manuscripts into public view prior to final editing, as the NIH policy calls for, could inadvertently pave the way for the rapid spread of confusing and potentially serious errors. Under today's proposal, only the final, published versions of research would be made public; the scientific record on which researchers depend would be maintained; and copyright protections would be preserved.

"Our plan preserves the critically important role of scientific journals," said Martin Frank, Ph.D., executive director of the American Physiological Society, a signatory of the proposal. "Nonprofit publishers add significant value to the original research through peer reviewing, copyediting, publishing, and disseminating the articles. Because we are offering our materials at no charge to NIH, they will not need to cut research funding for cancer, Alzheimer's and other diseases in order to develop their own system, which would mimic ours. This plan is a win-win for everyone involved."

Lenne P. Miller, senior director of publications at The Endocrine Society, said the proposal underscores the fact that nonprofit scientific and medical societies have worked closely with NIH for many years to see that important research findings are published and disseminated to the public.

"This is simply another step in fostering collaboration among the scientific communities and the public," Miller said. "We look forward to hearing back from Director Zerhouni and to meeting with him to move forward on an exciting partnership that would deliver enormous public benefits for generations to come."

The nonprofit publishers signing the joint letter to the NIH Director are: American Academy of Periodontology, American Association for Cancer Research, American Association for Clinical Chemistry, American Association of Immunologists, American College of Chest Physicians, American College of Physicians, American Dairy Science Association, American Dental Association, American Dental Education Association, American Diabetes Association, American Geriatrics Society, American Institute of Biological Sciences, American Physiological Society, American Psychiatric Association, American Roentgen Ray Society, American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, American Society for Clinical Pathology, American Society for Investigative Pathology, American Society for Nutrition, American Society for Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics, American Society of Animal Science, American Society of Hematology, American Society of Human Genetics, American Society of Plant Biologists, American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene, American Thoracic Society, Association for Molecular Pathology, Biophysical Society, Botanical Society of America, Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory Press, European Molecular Biology Organization, Federation of



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American Societies for Experimental Biology, HighWire Press, Stanford University, Infectious Diseases Society of America, Massachusetts Medical Society, Ornithological Council, Poultry Science Association, Project Hope, Society for Experimental Biology and Medicine, Society for Leukocyte Biology, Society for the Study of Reproduction, Society of Nuclear Medicine, Society of Toxicologic Pathology, The American Society of Nephrology, The Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology, The Endocrine Society, The Entomological Society of America, The Histochemical Society, The Physiological Society, The Protein Society, The International and American Associations of Dental Research, The Radiological Society of North America, The RNA Society, The Rockefeller University Press, The Royal College of Psychiatrists and The Society of Surgical Oncology.

A listing of the journals the non-profit publishers issue is available at: www.dcpinciples.org.

For more information, to receive a copy of the plan proposed by these publishers, or to schedule an interview with a member of the 57 non-profit organizations offering to partner with the NIH, please contact:

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