



**Forum for
Collaborative HIV Research**

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**HIV Specialist Dr. John G. Bartlett, MD Named to Leadership Team
of the Forum for Collaborative HIV Research**
*Appointment Comes as the Organization Expands Its Role in Accelerating Scientific
Advances in HIV/AIDS and Chronic Infection*

WASHINGTON, DC (March 10, 2011) – The Forum for Collaborative HIV Research today announced that one of the nation’s top experts in HIV/AIDS research, treatment and public policy -- John G. Bartlett, MD, Professor of Medicine in the Division of Infectious Diseases at The Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine -- has joined the leadership team as the new co-chair of the Forum’s Executive Committee.

Building on more than a decade of identifying and addressing emerging issues in the prevention, care, and treatment of people affected by HIV/AIDS, Dr. Bartlett’s appointment brings valuable expertise and new thinking to the Forum at a time when the organization is expanding its mission to advance the research agenda in TB/HIV co-infection and the Hepatitis C virus (HCV). Immediate priorities for the Forum include setting global standards for new clinical trials in HIV and for monitoring long-term drug toxicity, addressing HCV drug resistance and setting the standard for clinical trial designs to establish efficacy for new anti-HCV compounds.

“The Forum is honored to have such a distinguished leader in HIV/AIDS working to help us chart the organization’s future course in improving the prevention, diagnosis, treatment and care of people living with HIV/AIDS and all chronic infections or co-infections,” said Dr. Veronica Miller, executive director of the Forum. “The addition of Dr. Bartlett to our leadership team creates a new level of excellence for the Forum and its programs.”

As the new co-chair of the Forum’s Executive Committee, Dr. Bartlett will drive the Forum’s strategies for accelerating scientific advances in HIV and chronic infection, working in collaboration with James Rooney of Gilead, the industry co-chair, and the 50-plus committee members who provide scientific and policy oversight to the Forum and fund its programs. Committee members represent all the stakeholders in the HIV/AIDS field -- government, industry, academia, private foundations, public health, health insurance and the patient advocacy community.

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“I firmly believe in the Forum’s mission of bridging the gap between the two worlds co-existing in HIV, hepatitis C and tuberculosis – the exciting world where medical science is producing major breakthroughs in treatment and the challenging world where social issues are impeding efforts to ensure all patients are treated, have access to care and are retained in care. This is what implementation science is all about,” said Dr. Bartlett. “It is simply a privilege to work with Forum, which is the foremost institution in applying implementation science to HIV/AIDS and chronic infection. I look forward to helping the Forum achieve its goal of setting the research strategy and significantly improving patient care.”

Formerly Chief and now Professor of Medicine in the Division of Infectious Diseases at The Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, Dr. Bartlett is one of the foremost experts in HIV/AIDS in the country. The author of 18 books and more than 500 articles and reviews in peer-reviewed journals, Dr. Bartlett is a member of the Institute of Medicine, past president of the Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA), and the recipient of IDSA’s Alexander Fleming Award for Lifetime Achievement, the top honor in the infectious disease field. For 26 years, he served as chief of the Infectious Diseases Division at The Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, stepping down in June of 2006.

As Dr. Bartlett assumes his new post, the Forum also announced that the HHS Office of the Assistant Secretary (OASH) has joined the Executive Committee and now has a seat at the table in planning Forum initiatives. Representing OASH, Dr. Ronald Valdiserri, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Health, Infectious Diseases, will help the Forum develop initiatives that advance the recently announced National HIV/AIDS Strategy for the United States – the first strategic plan for reducing HIV/AIDS in the country. Currently, Dr. Valdiserri plays a major role in implementing the National HIV/AIDS strategy and works to ensure coordinated approaches within and across HHS agencies to address HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases of national public health significance.

Respected for his expertise and leadership in fighting HIV/AIDS within the federal government, Dr. Valdiserri served for a decade as Deputy Director of the National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and TB Prevention (NCHHSTP) within the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), where he was in charge of the science, public health surveillance programs and prevention research addressing HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted infections and tuberculosis. He has received Presidential Rank Awards from both President Clinton (2000) and President George W Bush (2006) for his service, in recognition of “consistently demonstrate(ing) strength, integrity and a commitment to excellence in public health”. In 2006, he joined the Department of Veterans Affairs as Chief Consultant for Public Health, where he successfully led the effort to require routine HIV testing within the VA system, a step that called for major policy revisions. Before joining the federal government, Dr. Valdiserri held several academic appointments at the University of Pittsburgh Schools of Medicine and Public Health.

These new changes come at a critical time in accelerating HIV/AIDS research and public policy. Although important progress has been made in lowering the annual number of AIDS-related deaths, more than 1 million Americans are living with HIV/AIDS and an estimated 56,000 are infected with HIV every year. Accordingly, the Forum is planning a number of major initiatives in 2011 to drive adoption of routine HIV testing and increase patients’ access to care, two strategies that will

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dramatically reduce HIV transmission and better support people living with HIV. This includes working in collaboration with various academic centers and HHS and its agencies, the CDC and the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), on a project to study the potential of HIV testing and linkage to care to control the HIV epidemic.

The Forum will also be working with government and foundation partners to implement research projects that address emerging and complex scientific issues that have stalled research on HIV prevention and treatment. These initiatives include evaluating the use of novel reproductive technology so couples with HIV can have biological children, initiating research on the interrelationship of autoimmune disease and HIV immune reconstitution, and publishing a series of reports on antivirals that act against HCV, pre-exposure prophylaxis to prevent HIV transmission, cardiovascular implications of HIV infection and sustainable international pharmacovigilance.

“If there was ever a time when we can change the course of HIV in this country, it is now,” said Dr. Miller. “Advancing the research agenda in HIV and other chronic infections must become a new imperative to which we devote the resources of our nation. The Forum’s model of ensuring that all stakeholders actively participate in the process will help achieve this goal. ”

About the Forum for Collaborative HIV Research

Now part of the University of California (UC), Berkeley School of Public Health and based in Washington, DC, the Forum was founded in 1997 as the outgrowth of the Keystone Center's report "The Keystone National Policy Dialogue on Establishment of Studies to Optimize Medical Management of HIV Infection," which called for an ongoing collaboration among stakeholders to address emerging issues in HIV/AIDS and set the research strategy. Representing government, industry, patient advocates, healthcare providers, foundations and academia, the Forum is a public/private partnership that is guided by an Executive Committee that sets the research agenda. The Forum organizes roundtables and issues reports on a range of global HIV/AIDS issues, including treatment-related toxicities, immune-based therapies, health services research, co-infections, prevention, and the transference of research results into care. Forum recommendations have changed the ways that clinical trials are conducted, accelerated the delivery of new classes of drugs, heightened awareness of TB/HIV co-infection, and helped to spur national momentum toward universal testing for HIV. [http:// www.hivforum.org](http://www.hivforum.org).

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