



Stem Cell Guidelines

Barbara Benson

Gale Scott

July 9, 2009

This week's release of new National Institutes of Health guidelines for human stem cell research got good reviews from the New York State Stem Cell Foundation. Susan Solomon, the group's president, speaking from a stem cell conference in Spain, called the NIH action "a wonderful thing." She says the action "does say that the NIH wants to do stem cell research." Ms. Solomon was disappointed, however, that processes including somatic cell nuclear transfer were not approved. She and other advocates of using human embryonic stem cells to find cures hope that President Barack Obama's yet-to-be-named NIH director will be a supporter of stem cell research. "It is really urgent because the new director will be the ultimate arbitrator of policy," she says.

Stem Cell Funding

The state announced \$21.5 million in funding for stem cell research through two separate Requests for Applications. One is for \$15 million, to "stimulate and support basic, applied, translational, pre-clinical and clinical investigations on any aspect of stem cell biology that will lead to a better understanding of the unique properties of stem cells and allow their use to treat disease." The other, for \$6.5 million, is for deriving and characterizing new human embryonic stem cell lines, to devise novel and improved derivation methods, increase efficiency in the production of new lines, standardize protocols, and enhance their potential for clinical application. Letters of intent are due August 5. The RFAs are at www.nyhealth.gov/funding and at www.stemcell.ny.gov.