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The New York Stem Cell Foundation Applauds the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine's Report on Mitochondrial Replacement Techniques

New York, NY (February 4, 2016) – The New York Stem Cell Foundation (NYSCF) applauds the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine's Institute of Medicine (IOM) report released on February 3rd, 2016 that states mitochondrial replacement therapy is ethical, as long as specific conditions and principles are met. A woman with a family history of mitochondrial diseases or who has had a child with such a disease has few options if she wants to have healthy children. NYSCF has been working for several years to bring this new therapy to patients and is pleased that one further hurdle has been overcome to bring MRT to these families.

"We are very pleased that the IOM report agreed that mitochondrial replacement therapy is ethical. Our mission is to cure and treat disease and we have a technique that right now can prevent the transmission of devastating mitochondrial diseases. I hope that with this report, we can provide families with a risk of passing these diseases onto their children an option for having healthy children in the very near future," said Susan L. Solomon, CEO of The New York Stem cell Foundation.

NYSCF however was disappointed that the report stated that only male embryos should be eligible for transfer in a clinical investigation. This again limits the options to those families and excludes the use of this disease-preventing technology for females. Preclinical research done by NYSCF investigators and others has shown that the exchange of the mitochondrial genotype can be complete. Because the mitochondrial genotype of the egg from which the nuclear genome is taken is eliminated, there should not be a determination that female embryos should not be implanted.

NYSCF commends the FDA for commissioning and the IOM for conducting this rigorous study that now brings us one step closer to allowing this technique to be used in preventing life-threatening diseases.

About The New York Stem Cell Foundation

The New York Stem Cell Foundation (NYSCF) is an independent organization founded in 2005 to accelerate cures and better treatments for patients through stem cell research. NYSCF employs over 45 researchers at the NYSCF Research Institute, located in New York, and is an acknowledged world leader in stem cell research and in developing pioneering stem cell technologies, including the NYSCF Global Stem Cell ArrayTM. Additionally, NYSCF supports another 75 researchers at other leading institutions worldwide through its Innovator Programs, including the NYSCF – Druckenmiller Fellowships and the NYSCF – Robertson Investigator Awards. NYSCF focuses on translational research in a model designed to overcome the barriers that slow discovery and replaces silos with collaboration. For more information, visit www.nyscf.org