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## **The Donaghue Medical Research Foundation Addresses The Black Hole of Scientific Discovery: Is Improved Marketing the Key to Improving Healthcare?**

**Health Leaders, Employers, Insurance Providers Gather to Discuss  
Research, Publicity and the State of Connecticut's Health**

HARTFORD, CT, (April 26, 2006). The residents of Connecticut and their health care providers may be unaware of medical research with the potential to improve their health, or even save their lives, according to experts who will address academic and health care leaders at a conference on May 10, 2006 at the Connecticut Convention Center. The event, entitled 'Beyond Eureka! From Discovery to Action' is being offered by the Patrick and Catherine Weldon Donaghue Medical Research Foundation, based in West Hartford.

The average time for a scientific discovery to make its way into practical use is a whopping 17 years. And, in spite of established "evidence based" treatments for many medical conditions, many doctors seem unaware of them or disinclined to use them. A recent study indicates that evidence-based treatments are used about 50% of the time. Two very sobering facts.

So, while Connecticut is home to prestigious academic institutions landmark research and groundbreaking findings, many new breakthroughs are never practically applied to everyday situations. This means that clinicians may be unaware of new, more effective or less invasive treatment methods, that Connecticut residents may be missing out on new weight loss or disease prevention techniques and that insurance providers and employers may ultimately be paying more for health care than they would if research were more widely – or more effectively – publicized.

The Patrick and Catherine Weldon Donaghue Foundation funds Connecticut-based researchers whose work shows promise of a practical benefit. Having witnessed the so-called 'black hole' of scientific discovery, the Foundation works to facilitate the adoption of new findings into practice to improve the health of Connecticut residents.

The problem, say experts, may be as simple as a lack of marketing savvy on the part of the medical community. "The research community is deeply committed to discovering new ways to improve health for people here in Connecticut and nationwide," said Donaghue Foundation trustee Ray Andrews. "Researchers in this state work hard to make a difference, and this conference will help them understand how their research can take a step further... into the hands of the people who need it."

The conference will feature speakers well versed in the role that marketing plays in promoting healthy behavior. Paul Raeburn, formerly a senior writer at *Business Week* and the chief science correspondent at the *Associated Press*, will discuss the mass media and its function in communicating new research to the masses in a talk entitled **"Lost in Translation: Why journalists don't tell the truth."**

Alan Andreasen, Georgetown University professor and Executive Director of the Social Marketing Institute, will discuss the concept of social marketing – as tapped by anti-smoking and nutrition education campaigns – as a tool for improving health, in a talk entitled **"The role of social marketing in creating a 'market' for healthy behavior."** Dr. Diane Meier, a geriatrician and director of the Center to Advance Palliative Care in New York City, will speak about the power of social marketing techniques in making social change, versus the traditional route of publishing findings in academic medical journals, in her talk **"Leading a double Life; Academic & activist in making a case for palliative medicine."**

The way scientific research gets portrayed is so often distorted that we are at risk of developing skepticism about health and science news," said Lynne Garner, Donaghue's Executive Director. "Moving research beyond discovery to practical application has and will continue to have a profound impact on the health of individuals and communities."

A number of the Foundation's grantees and their research will also be recognized at the conference. Attendance is free and open to the public, with a simple pre-registration required. Those interested can log on to [www.donaghue.org](http://www.donaghue.org) to register or for more information.

### **About the Donaghue Foundation**

The Patrick & Catherine Weldon Donaghue Medical Research Foundation was established by Ethel Donaghue in memory of her parents. The Foundation is a charitable testamentary trust dedicated to furthering the search for medical knowledge of practical benefit to human life and to the quality of the lives of people, particularly in Connecticut. The Foundation focuses on initiatives in and for the State to strengthen research on health issues, to promote future research leadership, and to put new knowledge to work for public benefit.