

Collaboration, focus, and innovation keys to replacing animal use

By Catherine Sprankle

Warren Casey, Ph.D., director of the NTP Interagency Center for the Evaluation of Alternative Toxicological Methods (NICEATM), delivered the keynote address at a Feb. 27 gathering of researchers and regulators in Somerset, N.J.

The 3Rs Sharing Conference, "Paving the Path to Regulatory Acceptance of Alternative Methods: Facilitating the Integration of Alternative Methods Into the Regulatory Framework," included speakers from the pharmaceutical and chemical industries presenting case studies and strategies for effective safety testing using fewer animals. The New Jersey Association for Biomedical Research ([NJABR](http://njabr.com/))

(<http://njabr.com/>)

sponsors the annual conference

Evolution of NTP and interagency alternative methods programs

Casey's keynote, "New Direction and Transformation of NICEATM and ICCVAM," addressed recent changes in NICEATM and the Interagency Coordinating Committee on the Validation of Alternative Methods (ICCVAM), which NICEATM supports. He outlined how these changes will allow ICCVAM to use limited resources more effectively, leverage the efforts of international partners, and take advantage of innovations in toxicological science.

He also discussed ICCVAM's advisory role and emphasized that collaboration and coordination will be important to future success. "Considering ICCVAM's limited resources, the projects the committee takes on need to be those most likely to lead to real reductions in animal use, in areas such as vaccine testing, acute toxicity testing, and identification of skin sensitizers," Casey noted. "But if ICCVAM collaborates and communicates effectively with its international partners and other stakeholders, the efforts of those partners can support ICCVAM's progress towards its goals."

In the past, NICEATM focused primarily on providing support to ICCVAM. Recently, NICEATM became active in the interagency [Tox21](http://ntp.niehs.nih.gov/go/tox21)

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collaboration, of which NTP is a partner. "NICEATM's expertise in validation study design and data analysis will help Tox21 achieve its goals of developing predictive toxicological models and reducing reliance on animal testing," said Casey.

(Catherine Sprankle is a communications specialist for Integrated Laboratory Systems Inc., the contractor supporting NICEATM.)



Casey noted that increasing NTP leadership and direction for ICCVAM will better support the acceptance and use of testing methods that reduce or replace animals. (Photo courtesy of Thomas Leach, New Jersey Association for Biomedical Research)

NJABR

NJABR organizes annual 3Rs Sharing Conferences at which veterinarians, toxicologists, members of animal welfare organizations, and others come together to discuss best practices to replace, reduce, and refine animal use for biomedical research and safety testing.

NJABR is part of a loose [national network](http://njabr.com/about/national-network/)

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of organizations that advocate for the continued availability of animal models for biomedical research.

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