

Preliminary Report on Progress of External Peer Review of  
CDC's Unexplained Dermopathy Project  
to the CCID Board of Scientific Counselors  
November 4, 2009

In January 2008, CDC launched an epidemiologic investigation of an unexplained skin condition which some refer to as "Morgellons." The primary goals of the investigation are to help us learn more about who may be affected with this condition and the symptoms they experience and to generate hypotheses about factors that may contribute to it. Data collection has been completed and analysis is ongoing. This investigation was conducted out of the National Center for Zoonotic, Vector-borne, and Enteric Diseases' (NCZVED) Division of Parasitic Diseases (DPD), with input from a cross-agency, multi-disciplinary workgroup. On September 24, 2009, DPD convened an external review panel to examine study activities to date and provide advice on future activities. DPD outlined several questions for the panel to address:

1. Have the project's goals and priorities been addressed?
2. What are the study's strengths?
3. What are the study's limitations?
4. Are there gaps of concern or need for additional study?
5. What findings can be communicated to the public, medical community, and stakeholder community?
6. What is the public health impact of this study?
7. What should the priorities be in the future?

The panel has not yet released a report of its findings to CDC. When we receive a report from the panel, we will share it with members of the BSC, along with the program's response to the panel's findings and recommendations. DPD and NCZVED leadership will meet with CDC leadership to discuss options for future program activities to address any issues raised by the panel, including considerations for potential organizational home for further research.