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September 19, 2013

Mr. Charlie Rothwell
Acting Director, National Center for Health Statistics
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
3311 Toledo Road
Hyattsville, Maryland 20782

Dear Mr. Rothwell:

As part of an on-going program review process, the Board of Scientific Counselors (BSC) of the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) commissioned a panel to review the Office of Research and Methodology (ORM) and to report its findings to the BSC. The enclosed report summarizes the review process; describes the current programs and activities of ORM, accomplishments and contributions, examines the issues and challenges facing ORM; and presents a series of recommendations. Roderick Little, Ph.D. from the University of Michigan chaired the panel. Additional panel members are listed in Attachment 1 of the report. The BSC commends Dr. Little and his fellow panel members for their conscientious review, and forwards the report and recommendations to you for action.

The report includes a series of recommendations designed to assist the program in meeting the challenges to its present operations and the potential for its future goals. The Panel concluded that the ORM is a key office for ensuring that NCHS carries out its mission to provide high-quality information about the nation's health. Under the current Director, the Office is on an excellent trajectory.

In addition to the recommendations presented in the Panel's report, some members of the BSC raised additional points for your consideration:

- Continue and expand strategic thinking about an alignment of ORM activities and initiatives with the overall NCHS mission and NCHS program needs and goals including finding a balance between basic research and technical assistance.
- Continue to examine ways to make the Research Data Center (RDC) more accessible including streamlining the process of gaining access.



2 – Charlie Rothwell

The Board of Scientific Counselors transmits the work of the panel and hopes that you will take the panel's full set of recommendations into consideration.

On behalf of the Board of Scientific Counselors, we respectfully submit the enclosed report.

Sincerely,

/s/

Raynard S. Kington, M.D., Ph.D.
Chair, NCHS Board of Scientific Counselors

Enclosures