

# Governor Christie, Pharmaceutical Executives And Federal Leaders Discuss Public-Private Partnership To Address America's Opioid Epidemic

Monday, September 18, 2017 Tags: [Addiction Taskforce](#)



*Roundtable Organized by President's Commission on Combating Drug Addiction and the Opioid Crisis*

**Trenton, NJ** – Governor Chris Christie, chairman of the President's Commission on Combating Drug Addiction and the Opioid Crisis, today joined Kellyanne Conway, Counselor to the President, and Former U.S. Rep. Patrick Kennedy, a commission member, in a roundtable at the War Memorial with leaders of the pharmaceutical industry, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to advance a public-private partnership that can address America's epidemic of addiction.

"The public and private sectors must join together to address this public health crisis and act quickly to stop an epidemic delivering a death toll equivalent to America enduring another 9-11 attack every two and a half weeks," Governor Christie said. "Today's roundtable went a long way to further discussions about public-private partnership opportunities between industry leaders, the NIH and FDA. It advanced a key recommendation our Commission made in the interim report we delivered to President Trump this past July directing the NIH to work with the pharmaceutical industry in two primary ways: to create additional medication assisted therapy or MAT options to treat opioid use disorders for people with addictions, and to develop new alternatives for pain relief that are safe, non-addictive or non-opioid analgesics."

The NIH is already partnering with leading biopharmaceutical companies, the FDA and public interest groups to enhance existing research efforts with a public-private collaborative research, and NIH Director Francis S. Collins, M.D., Ph.D., outlined that work during today's roundtable.

"The scope and magnitude of the addiction and overdose crisis in our country requires all hands on deck," said Dr. Collins. "I commend Governor Christie for his leadership on the President's Commission on Combating Drug Addiction and the Opioid Crisis, and for convening today's meeting of public and private sector groups who have the expertise to bring scientific solutions to this crisis. Working with the FDA and biopharmaceutical companies, NIH is committed to developing new treatment options for people fighting addiction and for those suffering from pain."

Stephen J. Ubl, president and chief executive officer of the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA), shared insights representing America's leading biopharmaceutical research companies.

"Governor Christie and the Trump Administration should be commended for the urgency and attention they are giving the critical issue of prescription drug abuse that is hurting families all across America. The Presidential Commission's interim report outlined a comprehensive framework for how all stakeholders can work together to tackle this growing epidemic," said Ubl. "Today, we discussed how we can build upon this foundation by creating a public-private partnership that would bring together the best and brightest minds from government and industry to accelerate medical innovations that would reduce the likelihood of abuse and provide non-addictive alternatives to pain management. We are committed to working with the Trump Administration to leverage the experience and expertise from across our industry to address this urgent national crisis."

Federal officials at the roundtable – including Anna Abram, FDA Deputy Commissioner; Reed Cordish, Assistant to the President for Intergovernmental and Technology Initiatives; and Dr. Rebecca Baker of the NIH – shared growing policy

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goals and initiatives to prevent addiction and combat this crisis.

"Addressing the crisis of opioid addiction is one of FDA's highest public health priorities," said Abram. "We will continue to work with public and private partners to address this crisis. FDA is especially focused on how we can slow the rate of new addiction by decreasing overall exposure to opioids, using our various public health tools."

"The development of an effective, non-addictive medication to replace opioids would be a breakthrough for patients suffering with chronic pain and prevent millions of Americans from developing addiction," said Walter J. Koroshetz, M.D., Director of the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke at the NIH.

"We are excited that biopharmaceutical companies are interested in the development of medications for opioid use disorders, and we look forward to working together on developing a partnership toward that end," said Nora D. Volkow, M.D., Director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse at the NIH.

Other representatives of the pharmaceutical industry in attendance were:

Christopher S. Boerner, President and Head of U.S. Commercial at BMS;  
Bob Hugin, Executive Chairman of Celgene;  
Ivan Cheung, Chairman and CEO of Eisai Inc.;  
Joaquin Duato, Executive Vice President and Worldwide Chairman of Johnson & Johnson;  
Candice Soldarini, CMO of Otsuka;  
Craig Landau, CEO of Purdue Pharma;  
Robert Stewart, COO of Allergan;  
Bob McMahon, President - US Market, Global Human Health Division of Merck;  
Sally Susman, Executive Vice President of Pfizer;  
David Stack, CEO of Pacira;  
Mike Derkacz, President and CEO of Braeburn;  
Christian Kopfli, CEO of Chromocell;  
Howard Robin, President and CEO of Nektar; and  
Bradley Campbell, President and COO of Amicus Therapeutics.

**Press Contact:**  
Brian Murray  
609-777-2600



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Office of the Governor  
PO Box 001  
Trenton, NJ 08625  
609-292-6000