We are pleased to announce the upcoming FDA and NIH co-sponsored meeting titled *Antisense Oligonucleotide (AON) Therapies in Neuromuscular Diseases*, taking place on the 27th and 28th September, 2010 in Washington DC, USA.

Given the growing number of AONs entering clinical development for multiple different neuromuscular disorders, the FDA and NIH, in collaboration with the research and advocacy communities, are taking a proactive role in developing and promoting regulatory science for the AONs by providing a forum for neuromuscular disease stakeholders to present the 'state-of-the-science' and exchange information on issues relevant to the AONs.

The meeting will focus on four sessions: 1) Toxicology and Preclinical Findings to Date, 2) Biomarkers, 3) Clinical Trial Outcomes, and 4) Patient Registries and Assessing Long-Term Outcomes and will be concerned with four neuromuscular disorders: 1) Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis 2) Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy 3) Myotonic Dystrophy and 4) Spinal Muscular Atrophy.

The goal of this meeting is to allow stakeholders to explore potential pathways forward for the AONs with the eventual goal of creating a sound scientific anchoring for neuromuscular disease clinical development programs. These initial discussions should be seen as first steps in what is likely to be an iterative process intended to lay the groundwork for future collaborations.

Over 120 stakeholders will be invited to participate in the meeting, consisting of researchers, academics, industry and patient group representatives. In order to accommodate all those unable to attend the meeting due to space limitations or geographical distance, the whole meeting will be streamed on the web via a dedicated weblink (to be made available shortly).

Additional details will follow in due course. In the meantime, if you have any specific queries please contact Abby Bronson abronson@cnmcresearch.org or / Emma Heslop emma.heslop@newcastle.ac.uk.

The Steering Committee Chairs

Kate Bushby, Newcastle, TREAT-NMD
Ed Connor, CNMC
Elizabeth McNeil, FDA
John Porter, NIH