



Press Release

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For further information, contact:
info@aspho.org, 847.375.6346

Advocacy Pushes Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Priorities

Chicago, October 2023: Legislative, funding, and drug supply issues impacting pediatric hematology/oncology were advocated for by the [American Society of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology \(ASPHO\)](#) recently, in partnership with the Alliance for Childhood Cancer (Alliance).

ASPHO reviewed legislative and appropriations priorities, joined in-person Congressional meetings, and visited the National Cancer Institute (NCI) as part of the Alliance for Childhood Cancer Fall Meeting in Washington, DC, in September. ASPHO liaison to the Alliance, Louis Rapkin, MD, of UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh, and ASPHO advocacy staff, along with other member organizations of the Alliance, discussed the advocacy priorities of: funding increases for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the NCI; continued funding for the Department of Defense's Peer Reviewed Cancer Research Program (PRCRP), the Childhood Cancer STAR Act and the Childhood Cancer Data Initiative (CCDI); addressing pediatric oncology drug shortages; and Accelerating Kids' Access to Care Act with various members of Congress. Also as part of the Alliance meeting, attendees visited the NCI and received an overview of the work of NCI from leaders Dr. James Gulley, Clinical Director, NCI/CCR, Dr. Brigitte Widemann, Chief, Pediatric Oncology Branch, and Dr. Carol Thiele, Deputy Chief, Pediatric Oncology Branch.

ASPHO also continues its work to combat drug shortages through its involvement in the Alliance for Childhood Cancer's Drug Shortages Workgroup, which compiled

data and stories from clinicians, patients, and families to demonstrate the impact shortages are having on pediatric cancer patients. Dr. Louis Rapkin, as ASPHO Liaison to the Alliance, and Dr. David Dickens of University of Iowa Stead Family Children's Hospital and a member of ASPHO's Advocacy Committee, gathered the data that was developed into a [handout](#) distributed during the Hill Day visits and will be used at additional meetings with members of Congress and the Administration.

ASPHO is excited to welcome Advocacy Committee member Zachary Prudowsky, MD, Baylor College of Medicine, as the Society's second liaison to the Alliance for Childhood Cancer.

Visit aspho.org/advocacy for additional information on legislative updates including a chart tracking legislation that ASPHO supports, sign-on letters, and the quarterly *Advocacy Brief* provided to members.

The American Society of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology (ASPHO) is the professional medical society of pediatric hematology/oncology subspecialists and other healthcare professionals dedicated to promoting the optimal care of children, adolescents, and young adults with blood disorders and cancer. Founded in 1981, ASPHO serves 2,000 members including physicians, researchers, advanced practice providers, and fellows in training by sponsoring educational and professional development programs, promoting discovery, advocating on behalf of its patient base and members, advancing professional practice and supporting partnerships to further its goals. Learn more: [2024 ASPHO Conference](#), [2022 Annual Report](#), [About Us](#), [Educational Offerings](#), and [Community](#).

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8735 W Higgins Road, Suite 300, Chicago, IL 60631

Phone: 847.375.4716 | Fax: 847.375.6483

info@aspho.org | www.aspho.org