

March 11, 2015

Paul M. Coates, Ph.D.
Director, Office of Dietary Supplements
National Institutes of Health


Dear Dr. Coates,

The Endocrine Society appreciates the invitation to provide comments on the Office of Dietary Supplements (ODS) re-examination of the ODS Strategic Plan. Founded in 1916, The Endocrine Society is the world's oldest, largest, and most active organization devoted to research on hormones and the clinical practice of endocrinology. Today, The Endocrine Society's membership consists of more than 18,000 scientists, physicians, educators, nurses and students in more than 100 countries. Society members represent all basic, applied, and clinical interests in endocrinology. We are extremely interested in the ODS Strategic Plan 2010-2014 Progress Report and we commend the ODS for providing a comprehensive update. We are particularly pleased to see that the ODS highlighted the need to develop accurate and consistent methodologies to measure 25-hydroxyvitamin D (25 OHD) and we encourage the ODS to continue to support research in this area.

In its revisions to the Strategic Plan, we urge the ODS and NIH to be cognizant of the unique needs of pediatric endocrinologists and pediatricians in their efforts (including screening, diagnosis, and treatment of children) as they relate to vitamin D. While we appreciate that the ODS developed consumer and provider fact sheets with references to infants, children, and adolescents; we urge the ODS to engage individuals with expertise in pediatrics in future vitamin D workshops and conferences. Potential stakeholders that could be approached to identify experts in vitamin D include the Endocrine Society, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Pediatric Endocrine Society, and the Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine. All of these organizations have deep clinical, epidemiological and research expertise in vitamin D and pediatrics. We also urge NIH and ODS to provide guidance and conduct research targeted to consumers and healthcare providers about safe sun exposure levels at all ages. Debate and misinformation still exists surrounding this topic, causing confusion among patients and consumers.

Thank you for considering the Endocrine Society's comments. We hope that our suggestions are helpful as you revise the ODS Strategic Plan. If you have any questions about our response, or if we can be of any additional assistance, please do not hesitate to contact Dr. Joseph Laakso, Associate Director of Science Policy, at jlaakso@endocrine.org.

Sincerely,



Richard J. Santen, MD
President, Endocrine Society