

2015 Resolution No: 4

Submitted by: Mayor Martin J. Walsh, Boston, Massachusetts

Equity in Medical Research Resolution

WHEREAS, twenty years ago, a bipartisan group of legislators worked with patients, providers, policy makers, and advocates to create and pass the 1993 National Institutes of Health (NIH) Revitalization Act, a law mandating that women and minorities be included in clinical trials funded by the NIH; and

WHEREAS, women are now routinely included in clinical trials, and we have learned how certain diseases present differently in men and women and that men and women experience illness differently; and

WHEREAS, despite some progress, medical research is too often flawed by its failure to examine sex differences; and

WHEREAS, we now know that cardiovascular disease, the number one killer of women in the United States yet only one-third of cardiovascular clinical trial subjects are female and fewer than one-third (31 percent) of cardiovascular clinical trials that include women report outcomes by sex; and

WHEREAS, women who have never smoked are three times more likely than nonsmoking men to get lung cancer yet women are still less likely to enroll in these trials than men and researchers often fail to analyze data by sex or include hormone status or other gender-specific factors in lung cancer research; and

WHEREAS, twice as many women than men suffer from depression yet fewer than 45 percent of animal studies on anxiety and depression use female lab animals; and

WHEREAS, two-thirds of the 5.1 million people currently suffering from Alzheimer's disease are women and a woman's overall lifetime risk of developing Alzheimer's disease is almost twice that of a man yet knowledge of sex differences in memory decline are not being adequately studied despite providing a unique window into identifying those at risk for the illness in order to bring them into treatment early, and ultimately, prevent the illness; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, The U.S. Conference of Mayors calls on the government and other funding agencies, including the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to ensure that the design of clinical studies includes a consideration of the sex of the subject, adequate participation of women, including women from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds, and the reporting of sex-stratified findings; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, The U.S. Conference of Mayors calls on the NIH and FDA to base funding and regulatory approval on medical research plans that either include adequate numbers of female subjects or provide a sound rationale for why the research focuses on only one sex; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, The U.S. Conference of Mayors calls on the government to ensure that medical device and pharmaceutical labeling should carry a disclaimer or warning label if clinical testing did not include adequate numbers of female subjects.