

NIH names Dr. Debara L. Tucci as the next director of NIDCD

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National Institutes of Health Director Francis S. Collins, M.D., Ph.D., has selected Debara L. Tucci, M.D., M.S., M.B.A., to lead the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD) as its new director.

Dr. Tucci currently is professor of surgery and director of the cochlear implant program in the Division of Head and Neck Surgery & Communication Sciences at Duke University, Durham, North Carolina. She is expected to join NIH on September 3, 2019.

“Dr. Tucci’s rich experience melds basic and clinical research in communication disorders with an impressive clinical and surgical practice in otology and neurotology. This experience, combined with her leadership roles for numerous scientific and professional organizations, as well as serving previously as an advisor at NIH, makes her ideally suited to lead the NIDCD into the future.”

In her new role, Dr. Tucci will oversee NIDCD’s annual budget of approximately \$459 million and lead the institute’s research and training programs in hearing, balance, taste, smell, voice, speech and language. Discoveries in these areas can have a dramatic impact on the lives of the tens of millions of people with deafness and other communication disorders.

Dr. Tucci has been on the faculty of the Duke University Medical center since 1993, where she co-founded the Duke Hearing Center. She has received continuous NIH funding since beginning her academic career. Her primary research interests focus on addressing barriers to hearing health care for older adults, starting with the primary care setting, and establishing a network of academic and community-based research sites to conduct clinical research in hearing and balance disorders

Dr. Tucci also leads NIDCD grants to train and mentor the next generation of clinician investigators in otolaryngology and communication sciences. While at the NIH, she will continue her work to address hearing loss as a global public health problem in her role as co-chair of the Lancet Commission on Global Hearing Loss.

Dr. Tucci is the recipient of the Distinguished Service Award from the American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery (AAO-HNS). She has served on the AAO-HNS Research Advisory Board, Board of Directors, Executive Committee and numerous subcommittees. She has served as president of the Association for Research in Otolaryngology, the American Otological Society and the American Neurotology Society, and is active in numerous other professional societies.

“I want to extend my appreciation and gratitude to Judith Cooper, Ph.D., for her commitment and leadership in serving as the NIDCD acting director after the retirement of long-time director James F. Battey, Jr., M.D., Ph.D., last May. She has agreed to continue to serve in a leadership role as the NIDCD deputy director”, said Dr. Collins

The NIDCD supports and conducts research and research training on the normal and disordered processes of hearing, balance, taste, smell, voice, speech, and language and provides health information, based upon scientific discovery, to the public.