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Newly Formed One Health Commission Holds Groundbreaking Summit at National Academy of Sciences on One Health: Improving Health in an Interconnected World

Institute of Medicine announces study on One Health

WASHINGTON, D.C. — November 17, 2009 — The newly formed One Health Commission, in partnership with the Institute of Medicine and National Research Council, today held a groundbreaking summit at the National Academy of Sciences convening leading health science experts across the human, animal and ecosystem disciplines. The One Health Commission Summit aimed to raise awareness of the importance of transcending institutional and disciplinary boundaries to improve health outcomes for all species. During the Summit, the Institute of Medicine formally announced its intent to conduct a study that will shape the One Health vision.

Doug O'Brien, J.D., Senior Advisor to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, delivered the keynote address, calling for integrated solutions and collaborative leadership to address the significant challenges of a changing environment populated by interconnected animal, human and ecosystem interactions.

“As we combat global pandemics, such as H1N1 influenza, it is imperative that health science professions, academia, government agencies and non-governmental organizations act in unison across the human, animal and ecosystem sciences,” said Mr. O'Brien.

Leading experts from such disparate organizations as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Food and Drug Administration, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and College of Veterinary Medicine at The Ohio State University also expressed the critical need for a One Health approach through the purview of their diverse fields.

The Institute of Medicine study will examine the interdependencies of human, animal and ecosystem health and assess the potential value to be gained through a collaborative approach towards improved health worldwide. The results of the study will be utilized to develop a strategic roadmap for public and private policies and initiatives that will be instrumental in shaping the implementation of the One Health vision. The Institute of Medicine study is scheduled to launch in early 2010, pending the acquirement of sufficient funding.

Dr. Roger Mahr, DVM, Chief Executive Officer of the One Health Commission, indicated, “The Institute of Medicine study will afford the opportunity to develop an evidence-based rationale for One Health and offer recommendations to guide the implementation of One Health, both domestically and internationally.”

An audio webcast of the event is available at www.national-academies.org. A comprehensive agenda and additional information about the One Health Commission Summit can be accessed at www.onehealthcommission.org.

The One Health Commission Summit set the stage for the work of the Commission, which was created to establish closer professional collaborations and educational opportunities across the health science professions and their related disciplines. By bringing together policy makers and leaders from the private, public and academic sectors, the One Health Commission hopes to develop and sustain an integrated strategy for improved public health based on the principles of One Health. The Commission's goals also include raising awareness of the value of One Health and developing an interdisciplinary research agenda for the One Health movement.

About the One Health Commission

The One Health Commission represents a call for greater cooperation across multiple disciplines at the local, national and global level to achieve optimal health for people, domestic animals, wildlife and the environment. The Commission incorporated as a nonprofit organization on June 29, 2009. Initial funding for the creation of the One Health Commission includes a grant provided by The Rockefeller Foundation. For more information, visit www.onehealthcommission.org.

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