Byers Named IRB Executive Chair

Dear Colleagues,

I am very pleased to announce that Derek Byers, MD, PhD, has accepted the role of IRB Executive Chair for Washington University, beginning August 1. He will succeed Dr. Amanda Cashen, Professor of Medicine in the Division of Oncology, Section of Stem Cell Transplant/Leukemia, who has been serving in the role since May 2019.

Dr. Byers, Professor of Medicine in the Division of Pulmonary and Critical Care, is an Associate Director for the ICTS, Director of the Pulmonary Morphology Core, and directs the WashU Advanced Lung Disease Tissue Registry. Dr. Byers’ clinical efforts are focused on lung transplantation and his research interests are focused on translational studies of chronic lung disease and transplant complications. Dr. Byers also directs the Pulmonary Morphology Core, which processes thousands of tissue specimens each year and serves the processing needs of over 30 labs annually at Washington University. In 2007, Dr. Byers began the Advanced Lung Disease Tissue Registry that is comprised of hundreds of lung samples from patients with end-stage lung diseases and from non-transplantable donors. The registry is used by many WUSM researchers to identify and validate the mechanisms that cause lung diseases and to develop new diagnostics and treatments for these conditions.

Dr. Byers earned his B.S. in Microbiology at the University of Oklahoma, a PhD and MD from University of Texas Southwestern Medical School in Dallas, and completed his training in the Division of Pulmonary and Critical Care at Washington University School of Medicine. Byers has over 10 years of experience in the oversight of clinical research on the Washington University IRB, serving as a Chair for 10 years and Alternate Executive Chair for 4 years, and as a physician reviewer for the Central IRB, Advarra, for 6 years.

As Washington University’s IRB Executive Chair, Dr. Byers will hold leadership responsibility for IRB review and approval of human subject research in accordance with current guidelines, institutional policies, and federal and state regulations governing human subject protections. Derek’s extensive clinical, research and administrative experience, broad knowledge in the conduct of IRB meetings, criteria for protocol review and approval and the regulations for human subject’s research makes him an excellent choice for this position.

I also want to take this opportunity to thank Amanda Cashen, MD for her extraordinary leadership of the IRB over the last four years. Dr. Cashen will transition to an expanded role in the Division of Oncology and continue her research and clinical practice, which focuses on the care of patients with hematologic malignancies, including stem cell transplant and cellular immunotherapies. We are fortunate that Dr. Cashen has agreed to participate in the IRB as a committee chair.

Please join us in congratulating Dr. Byers on this important leadership role.

Sincerely,
Mark E. Lowe, MD, PhD
Vice Chancellor for Research
Senior Associate Dean of Research at WashU Medicine
Harvey R. Colten Professor of Pediatric Science
Washington University School of Medicine