

Opportunities for Encouraging the Consideration of Alternative Methods

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In the United States, Animal Welfare Act regulations require investigators to consider alternative methods prior to using animals for research, teaching, or testing whenever proposed procedures involve more than slight or momentary pain or distress (9 C.F.R. § 2.31 (d)(ii)(2022)). Despite regulatory requirements, in practice there is little incentive for investigators that have long used specific in vivo models and well-established protocols to work toward validating an alternative approach. ICCVAM established the Consideration of Alternative Methods Workgroup (CAMWG) to explore opportunities for encouraging those using animal-based models to not only consider but actively pursue potential new approach methodologies (NAMs) that could contribute to replacing, reducing, or refining the use of live animals. Over the last year, the CAMWG has worked with a variety of stakeholders to catalog their perspectives on how alternatives to traditional animal tests are considered in the development of their respective organization's toxicology testing programs. The goal of these efforts was to hear from multiple stakeholders within the toxicology testing community on their experience with the use of NAMs and other alternative methods. These discussions included agrochemical companies, industrial chemical companies, consumer products companies, pharmaceutical companies, academic researchers, and Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee members. This presentation summarizes stakeholder perspectives on various aspects of using NAMs such as availability, validity, barriers, and funding opportunities that have been collected during this effort to better understand how more serious consideration and utility of NAMs can be fostered. This project was partially funded by NIEHS under Contract No. HHSN273201500010C.