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Hussein Tawbi named to President's Council on Science and Technology

BY SCOTT MERVILLE

President Donald Trump today announced his intent to appoint Hussein Tawbi, M.D., Ph.D., associate professor and deputy chairman of Melanoma Medical Oncology, to the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology, known as PCAST.

PCAST, composed of the director of the Office of Science and Technology and up to 16 additional members appointed by the president, advises the president on matters involving science, technology, education and innovation policy.

"I truly am honored to serve on PCAST and to participate in shaping a strategy to ensure the United States remains a leader for science and technology," Tawbi says. "I am particularly excited to tackle key challenges facing researchers and to identify opportunities to augment long-term impact."

Tawbi maintains an active oncology practice and is an internationally recognized leader in melanoma clinical and translational research. He has led multiple high-impact clinical trials, including a practice-changing clinical trial of combination immunotherapy for melanoma patients whose disease has spread to the brain. The combination of immune checkpoint inhibitors ipilimumab and nivolumab shrank brain metastases in 56% of patients, unprecedented results that were reported in the New England Journal of Medicine.

Tawbi is co-director of MD Anderson's Brain Metastasis Clinic, which he co-founded a year ago to address the difficult issue of treating cancer that has spread from other organs to the brain. Tawbi also is director of Melanoma Clinical Research and Early Drug Development, and has a joint appointment in the Department of Investigational Cancer Therapeutics. Tawbi also co-chairs the Melanoma Committee in the Southwest Oncology Group (SWOG) of the National Cancer Institute.

His translational research interests also include studying mechanisms of response to immunotherapy in brain metastases, overcoming resistance to melanoma treatment, epigenetic regulation of treatment resistance, drug development and early phase clinical trials.

Most recently, he co-led a study in the journal Nature showing that a patient's response to checkpoint blockade immunotherapy is affected by the presence of immune B cells in the tumor.

Tawbi received his Ph.D. in clinical translational science from the University of Pittsburgh, and his M.D. from American University of Beirut.



Hussein Tawbi, M.D., Ph.D.

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