



Michael A. Diefenbach, Ph.D.

Biographical Sketch

Michael A. Diefenbach is a Professor in the Departments of Medicine, Urology and Psychiatry at Northwell Health and the School of Medicine at Hofstra/Northwell in New York. He is the Director of Behavioral Research in the Departments of Medicine and Urology and the Academic Director of the Faculty Research Career Development Program. He is a founding member of the Center of Health Innovation and Outcomes Research, and co-directs the Cancer Prevention and Control program at the Montefiore Cancer Center.

Dr. Diefenbach's research explores treatment decision making in the cancer and medical settings. As a health/social psychologist he focuses on developing theory-based patient-facing programs. The ultimate goal of his research is to improve patients' decision making, adjustment to disease and quality of life. His interest in decision making culminated in the publication of the edited *Handbook of Health Decision Science*.

Dr. Diefenbach's research has been continuously funded by the NIH, the ACS, and the Department of Defense. He has over 80 publications. His work has integrated technological approaches, starting with the first software based education and decision tool for prostate cancer patients (PIES), which was followed by a number of web- and app-based programs (Healing Choices for Prostate Cancer, 2Breathe, Healium). Before joining Northwell Health, he served on the faculties of Mount Sinai in New York, and Fox Chase Cancer Center in Philadelphia. He completed his undergraduate studies at the University of Mainz, Germany, before receiving a Fulbright Fellowship to study Health Psychology at the University of Wisconsin under the mentorship of Dr. Howard Leventhal. He received his doctoral degree from Rutgers-The State University of New Jersey.

He is a frequent reviewer for the NIH (past member of the Behavioral Medicine study section) and other organizations. He is senior associate editor of SBM's Translational Behavioral Medicine and on the editorial board of Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers and Prevention.

Dr. Diefenbach has been a member of SBM for over 20 years and has served a variety of functions within the Society. He was the program co-chair and chair for two annual meetings (2009 and 2010), served as chair of the Cancer SIG, is currently a mentor in the Leadership Institute and SBM's Secretary/Treasurer. During his tenure as Treasurer, prudent financial

management and investments increased SBM's financial stability by tripling its reserves. He is a Fellow of SBM and a recipient of the C. Tracy Orleans Distinguished Service Award.

Personal Statement

SBM's strength is the dedication of its members and our shared commitment to achieving excellence in science. As President, my goal will be to elevate SBM and our science, to set the national agenda on health, work on diversifying our income streams and enhance our mentoring efforts.

Like all of you, I am proud to call SBM my professional home. Our annual meeting is the highlight of my academic year. Each year, I feel the excitement of listening to groundbreaking research, the satisfaction of seeing students and post-docs presenting their papers, to catch-up with colleagues and to explore new research ideas. This for me is the essence of our Society: passionate and like-minded people who come together to discuss their research in a supportive environment—research that has the potential to positively impact the lives of all people and communities.

I have always been impressed and inspired by our members' dedication and tireless efforts for the public good. Our visits to Capitol Hill, our white papers and our social media outreach efforts have shown results. Yet, I would like SBM to be the organization that sets the agenda for future health initiatives in the country. We have shown that we have the evidence and expertise, now we need to put SBM in the center of the national discourse on health.

To achieve this, I propose to launch an initiative to identify ***“Provocative Questions in Behavioral Medicine.”*** Together and through new partnerships we will develop a visionary agenda for the next years. We will translate and promote our agenda to the media, industry, and the public at large and will advocate for funding. It will raise our visibility and provide the opportunity for new and innovative partnerships which will also strengthen us financially.

An SBM-wide initiative like this will be a unique opportunity for mentoring and supporting early career researchers, particularly in the area of communication and advocacy of our agenda to the public and policy makers. It will enhance behavioral science and SBM's role in the national discourse on health, support the next generation of researchers and will provide additional opportunities for revenue generation.

SBM has been an integral part of my professional career, and it has been a privilege to see SBM grow. I look forward to building on our successes and with your continued dedication and enthusiasm we will achieve an even stronger and influential Society.