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AABB names Frederick Appelbaum keynote speaker for 2026 Annual Meeting

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The transplant physician-scientist will explore the evolution of bone marrow transplantation and the future of gene therapy at the blood and biotherapies meeting.



Frederick Appelbaum, MD, executive vice president and professor in the clinical research division at Fred Hutch Cancer Center, will deliver the keynote address at the 2026 Association for the Advancement of Blood & Biotherapies (AABB) Annual Meeting in Atlanta, Oct. 17-19.

Appelbaum is a pioneer in bone marrow transplantation, a therapy now used in more than 45,000 patients annually, and author of Living Medicine: Don Thomas, Marrow Transplantation, and the Cell Therapy Revolution. His address will recognise the pivotal role played by the blood and biotherapies community in the evolving area of bone marrow transplantation.

Physicians, nurses, scientists, researchers, administrators and other health care professionals from throughout the world will gather to explore advances in transfusion medicine and biotherapies at the 2026 AABB Annual Meeting. This year's program will highlight emerging research, practical innovations and technologies shaping the future of the field.

The meeting will also feature an expanded Biotherapies Pavilion that will host a cross-section of leading organisations, with additional sessions and open mic conversations with industry leaders. The full agenda for the 2026 AABB Annual Meeting is now available.

In this year’s keynote presentation, Appelbaum will trace the evolution of advanced therapies from the earliest bone marrow transplantation milestones to the frontier of in vivo gene therapy. He will also examine the longstanding relationship between transplantation and transfusion medicine, and the foundational role that blood banking infrastructure has played in enabling advances in patient care.

“Dr. Appelbaum's career reflects the remarkable convergence of bone marrow transplantation, transfusion medicine and biotherapies. His perspective on how these disciplines have evolved together will provide valuable insights for our community as we look toward the future,” said Debra BenAvram, chief executive officer of AABB.

“The history of bone marrow transplantation is closely linked to the blood banking and transfusion medicine community,” said Appelbaum. “That partnership helped shape modern cellular therapies and what it may mean for the next generation of innovation.”

Attendees at the 2026 AABB Annual Meeting will have opportunities to earn continuing education credits, connect with peers, and explore new scientific and technological developments. In-person and On-Demand+ registration for the meeting is available at aabb.org/annual-meeting.

Those unable to attend in person will be able to access select meeting highlights through IBTV. IBTV is a dedicated life sciences storytelling platform producing original video and podcast content; it also collaborates with leading industry publications to connect audiences with the people, ideas and innovations driving the future of health care and biotechnology.