

Ad Hoc Group Weekly Round Up – Jan. 8, 2018

Each week, the Ad Hoc Group Weekly Round Up will feature hashtags and/or tweets (follow us at [@fundNIH](#)) suggested by members of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) advocacy community. We encourage all readers who are active on social media to use these messages, and welcome suggestions from the community for future issues of the Weekly Round Up. Here's this week's featured tweet:

Axios (@Axios)

Lawmakers on both sides of the aisle are planning to give the National Institutes of Health an additional \$2 billion toward their budget this year. https://www.axios.com/taxpayer-funded-medical-research-is-gaining-bipartisan-su-1515281705-aa51f78b-c823-4d41-a7f2-e72ad50cd311.html?utm_source=twitter&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=organic

1. Lawmakers Continue Negotiations on Government Funding

Congressional leadership and White House officials are continuing discussions on a deal to fund the federal government, including settling on top line budget caps for defense and nondefense discretionary spending. In a joint [statement](#), House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) highlighted progress after a Jan. 3 meeting with White House legislative director Marc Short and Office of Management and Budget Director Mick Mulvaney. Ahead of the meeting, Leader Pelosi sent a “Dear Colleague Letter” to democratic lawmakers listing funding for the NIH among the items on her priority list. While an official agreement is not set, on Jan. 6, an [article](#) in the New York Times cited that, “For the third straight year, lawmakers are planning to increase the budget of the National Institutes of Health by \$2 billion.” The federal government is currently operating on a continuing resolution which is set to expire Jan. 19.

2. STAT: The NIH is in Danger of Losing its Edge in Creating Biomedical Innovations

On Jan. 3, STAT published an opinion [article](#) by Jeffrey Bluestone, PhD, professor of metabolism and endocrinology at the University of California, San Francisco, and the CEO and president of the Parker Institute for Cancer Immunotherapy; David Beier, JD, managing director of Bay City Capital and a senior adviser to the Parker Institute for Cancer Immunotherapy; and Laurie H. Glimcher, MD, CEO and president of the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in Boston and professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School. The article begins by highlighting the progress of the biomedical research community, but warns of pressures to funding and its potential impact on future breakthroughs. The authors write, “For generations, America has been the world leader in biomedical research innovation. Lately, though, it has been losing its preeminence in discovery to other countries.” While the researchers suggest reforms to the NIH, the article also describes “declining levels of federal funding for biomedical research,” in addition to state level cuts.

3. American Cancer Society Journal Shows Drop in Cancer Death Rates

A new [report](#) published in the American Cancer Society Journal CA: A Cancer Journal for Clinicians on Jan. 4 shows that cancer death rates have dropped 26% from 1991 to 2015. The annual report states that the drop “resulted in approximately 2.4 million fewer cancer deaths during this time period.” The article also notes that the continued fight against cancer “requires broader application of existing cancer control knowledge, including smoking cessation and the increased uptake of cancer-preventing cervical and colorectal cancer screening and HPV vaccination, across all segments of the population, with an emphasis on disadvantaged groups.”

4. NIH Director Reflects on 2017

On Jan. 2, NIH Director Francis Collins, MD, PhD, [posted](#) a blog that looked back on the breakthroughs from the last year, as highlighted by the journal Science. Specifically, Dr. Collins used his first post of the year to highlight projects that involved NIH support, including advances in gene therapy and cryo-electron microscopy, among others.

5. Call for Golden Goose Award Nominations

The [Golden Goose Award](#) team is accepting nominations for the 2018 year. The Golden Goose Awards honors federally funded research that may be odd, obscure or serendipitous but ends up having a major impact on society. To submit a nomination, follow [this link](#), or visit goldengooseaward.org and click on “nominate” in the top right corner. If submitting a nomination, be prepared to talk about who you are nominating, what unexpected impact the research has had, and which U.S. federal agency funded the work. Nominations are accepted on a rolling basis throughout the year, but for the best chance to be considered for the 2018 award, submit by Jan. 31.

6. Early Bird Registration for COSSA Science Policy Conference and Social Science Advocacy Day – Apr. 30-May 1

On Apr. 30 to May 1, the Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA) is hosting its annual advocacy day in Washington, DC. The [COSSA Science Policy Conference](#) brings together COSSA members and other stakeholders for a day of discussion about federal policy impacting our science followed by the only annual, coordinated advocacy day in support of all of the social and behavioral sciences. To register and for more information, visit the [COSSA website](#).

Please Note: If you have information of interest to the NIH advocacy community that you would like to share with the Ad Hoc Group, please forward it to Joe Bañez at jbanez@aamc.org or Tannaz Rasouli at trasouli@aamc.org.