



THE AD HOC GROUP
FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH

Ad Hoc Group Weekly COVID-19 Follow Up

July 2, 2020

In this time of the COVID-19 pandemic, we will be publishing an additional weekly update focused on COVID-19 to highlight related NIH actions and guidance as well as activities from the Ad Hoc Group community. As always, please forward any relevant items to Christa Wagner (chwagner@aamc.org) for inclusion in the publication!

Congressional and NIH News

Senate Republicans Begin Work on Next COVID Relief Package

Senate Republicans are beginning to work on the next COVID-19 emergency supplemental funding package, with a focus on “kids, jobs, and health care,” stated Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) as reported June 30 in [CQ \(subscription required\)](#). Specifically, Senate Labor-HHS Appropriations Subcommittee Chair Roy Blunt (R-Mo.) told reporters that his staff has been asked to begin work on provisions for additional investments in testing, therapeutics, and vaccines.

Health Officials Share Update on Getting Back to Work and School

National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) Director Anthony Fauci, MD, was one of four government officials [testifying before the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee](#) in a June 30 hearing on updates on getting back to work and school. Committee members questioned witnesses on several topics including updates on the current pandemic burden in the U.S., COVID-19 tests, treatments, and vaccines, and officials’ recommendations for responding to future pandemics. Dr. Fauci noted concern about the current rate of 40,000 new infections per day, adding, “I would not be surprised if we go up to 100,000 a day if this does not turn around and so I am very concerned.”

Senate Appropriations Hearing on Operation Warp Speed

NIH Director Francis Collins, MD, PhD, will testify before the Senate Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies (Labor-HHS) Appropriations Subcommittee to review the coronavirus vaccine development program Operation Warp Speed. [The hearing will take place on Thursday, July 2 at 10:00 a.m. EST](#) and will be webcast. Dr. Collins will be joined by CDC Director Robert Redfield, MD, and Gary Disbrow, PhD, acting director of Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority.

Ad Hoc Group Endorses RISE Act

[The Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research sent a July 2 letter of support](#) to the original cosponsors of the Research Investment to Spark the Economy (RISE) Act ([H.R. 7308](#)), which would authorize approximately \$26 billion in supplemental funding for federal research agencies, including NIH, to ameliorate the tremendous disruption to federally funded research from COVID-19. The Ad Hoc Group joins [nearly 270 organizations and institutions](#) in endorsing the legislation. Original cosponsors include Reps. DeGette (D-Colo.), Upton (R-Mich.), Johnson (D-Texas), Lucas (R-Okla.), Eshoo (D-Calif.), and Gonzalez (R-Ohio).

NIH Names Shannon Zenk as Director of the NINR

The NIH announced that it has [named Shannon N. Zenk, PhD, MPH, RN, FAAN, as the next director of the National Institute of Nursing Research \(NINR\)](#), to begin in the early fall. Dr. Zenk is currently a Nursing Collegiate Professor in the Department of Population Health Nursing Science at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) College of Nursing, and a fellow at the UIC Institute for Health Research and Policy.

ACTIV Working Group Establishes Guidelines for Human Challenge Studies

NIH's Accelerating COVID-19 Therapeutic Interventions and Vaccines (ACTIV) Vaccines Working Group evaluated options and determined an optimal set of parameters to human challenge studies for SARS-CoV-2 vaccine studies, published July 1 [as a Perspective in the New England Journal of Medicine](#). [According to the NIH press release](#), "The authors conclude that large, randomized, controlled trials of SARS-CoV-2 are the fastest and most effective path forward for establishing vaccine safety and efficacy. Parallel development of controlled human infection models [CHIMs] may provide complementary tools to address additional questions such as the duration of immunity and correlates of protection, if such studies can be conducted ethically."

Ad Hoc Member Resources

Sign On Letter to HHS Secretary to Extend COVID-19 Public Health Emergency

The American Society for Microbiology, American Public Health Association, Association of Public Health Laboratories, Association of State and Territorial Health Officials, National Association of County and City Health Officials and Trust for America's Health invite you to join them in signing a letter to HHS Secretary Azar urging him to renew the current public health emergency (PHE) declaration for at least an additional 90 days before it expires on July 25. It is imperative that the federal government continue to deploy all resources and authorities necessary to protect the public, spur the development of medical countermeasures, and assist states and localities as they continue to respond to this urgent situation. [Sign on here](#). Questions? Contact Mary Lee Watts, ASM Director of Federal Affairs, at mwatts@asmusa.org.

United for Medical Research: Unprecedented Impact Fact Sheets

United for Medical Research (UMR) recently released Part 2 in a series of fact sheets to examine the unprecedented impact that COVID-19 is having on biomedical research. From a laser-like focus by researchers, medical professionals and life sciences and biopharmaceutical companies worldwide to understand, mitigate, treat and eradicate the pandemic, to massive disruptions to ongoing research in all fields that is jeopardizing important work, stalling life-saving clinical trials and upending the career paths of many graduate students and early career scientists, COVID-19 is touching all aspects of our biomedical research enterprise. [Part 2 in the series focuses on the threat to the research pipeline](#).

COVID-19 - Back to Campus: A Course on COVID-19 Safety

The Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) has collaborated with member institutions and CITI Program to [launch a complimentary course to train research faculty and team members, research staff, students, and other staff at medical schools and research organizations on COVID-19 safety](#) as they return to campus this fall. The highlights of the course include a discussion of recommendations from NIH, CDC, and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, as well as optional modules on specific research areas. Organizations may subscribe to this free course by October 1, and learners will receive a CITI Program completion report as evidence of successful training. [Download a demo and learn more about the course here](#).

Upcoming Events

Congressional Briefing: COVID-19 Lifestyle Changes and Vision – July 8

The Alliance for Eye and Vision Research (AEVR) and Tear Film and Ocular Surface Society (TFOS) are co-hosting a Dry Eye Awareness Month Congressional briefing titled, "How Lifestyle Changes During the COVID-19 Pandemic Can Affect Vision." The briefing will take place Wednesday, July 8, from 12:00-1:15pm EST at 601 New Jersey Ave. NW and via live stream. [Additional information is available on the briefing flyer.](#) [Please RSVP to Dina Beaumont](#) for live stream information.

Briefing on Controlling COVID-19 Surges and Preparing for the Fall – July 8

The Infectious Diseases Society of America, HIV Medicine Association, Society of Healthcare Epidemiology of America and the Pediatric Infectious Diseases Society of America invite you to a virtual briefing to learn from infectious diseases experts about what's needed to strengthen the U.S. response to COVID-19 now and in preparation for flu season in the fall. The virtual briefing will take place on Wednesday, July 8m from 3-4pm EST. [Register here](#) to receive log-in information. Please submit your questions for the panelists when you register. Please email [Lisa Cox](#) or [Jose Rodriguez](#) with questions regarding the briefing.

Virtual Rally for Medical Research – Sept. 16-17

The Rally for Medical Research is held every September and includes more than 300 national organizations coming together in support of to call on our nation's policymakers to make funding for National Institutes of Health (NIH) a national priority and raise awareness about the importance of continued investment in medical research that leads to more progress, more hope, and more lives saved. This year's event will be held virtually on September 16-17. For more information and to register, please visit <https://rallyformedicalresearch.org>.

NIH COVID-19 Resources

[NIH COVID-19 resource for applicants and grantees](#) including guidance for various aspects of research and grant application processes, as well as FAQs and COVID-19 funding opportunities.

[COVID-19 "Updates History" webpage](#) that details relevant updates for applicants and grantees by date.

[FAQ document on COVID-19 flexibilities](#) related to policies and programs affecting the grants process.

[HHS COVID-19 awards tracking website](#) including data on awards made by all HHS awarding agencies with supplemental appropriations provided through the first three COVID-19 supplemental packages (Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2020; Families First Coronavirus Response Act; and the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security [CARES] Act).

Job Postings

FASEB Seeks Associate Director for Legislative Affairs

The Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB) seeks an experienced [Associate Director for Legislative Affairs](#) to serve as principal representative of FASEB to members of Congress and congressional staff and advise FASEB leadership and the Board of Directors on legislative strategies and advocacy initiatives related to increasing federal funding for and awareness of life sciences research. This position is responsible for developing and executing a successful appropriations strategy and legislative advocacy program on behalf of FASEB and FASEB member societies and coordinating with other stakeholders in the biomedical research advocacy community. Please see the [attached PDF job description](#) and [click here](#) to submit a cover letter, resume, and a short writing sample. For more information about FASEB, visit www.faseb.org.

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 Christa Wagner at chwagner@aamc.org or Tannaz Rasouli at trasouli@aamc.org.*