

Ad Hoc Group Weekly Round Up – August 7, 2017

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:

Rally for Medical Research (@RallyForNIH)

We're in August already? Where does the time go? Register today for #RallyMedRes. It's only a month and a half away! <http://RallyForMedicalResearch.org>

1. House and Senate Away from Washington for August Recess

On Aug. 3, Senators joined House lawmakers in their home jurisdictions for August recess. While the House is completely out of session for the month, the Senate has scheduled nine “pro-forma” sessions, which sets up a procedural hurdle to prevent the president from making recess appointments. Both chambers are scheduled to be back in session on Tuesday, Sept. 5. The Ad Hoc Group Weekly Round Up will break for the August recess and return on Tuesday, Sept. 5.

2. Amendment Passed in Homeland Security Minibus Could End Vital Studies at the VA

[An amendment](#) introduced by Rep. Dave Brat (R-Va.) that would prohibit funding for the use of dogs in certain studies at the U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs (VA) was included in the House-passed Homeland Security minibuss (H.R. 3219), also known as the Make America Secure Appropriations Act. Pushed by animal rights groups like the White Coat Waste (WCW) Project and the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), Rep. Brat's amendment mirrors a standalone bill serving the same purpose, [H.R. 3197](#), the “Preventing Unkind and Painful Procedures and Experiments on Respected Species (PUPPERS) Act of 2017.” If enacted, this would be the first time Congress has dictated the appropriateness of specific animal models to research and could set the precedent to outlaw further species at other agencies like the NIH. [Please click here](#) to read the National Association for Biomedical Researchers (NABR) one-pager on the bill. To learn about the immense value of canines in cardiology, cancer, Alzheimer's, diabetes, kidney disease, spinal research and more, [please visit NABR's site](#).

3. The Hill Opinion: Efforts by Animal Rights Groups to Defund NIH are Dangerous

On July 24, Matthew Bailey, president of NABR wrote an [opinion piece](#) that expresses concerns with calls to cut NIH funding and makes the case for animal research in medical science. Bailey highlights the impact of animal research, including “breakthroughs from the germ theory of disease to the polio vaccine to the 25 most prescribed medications in America.” Bailey adds that animal research has allowed progress in medicine, including “numerous therapies and treatments on the horizon for conditions like HIV/AIDS, Alzheimer's disease and cancer.” He adds, “Despite claims by animal rights groups, animal research remains a crucial part of the process to improve the global healthcare landscape by clearing a pathway to prevent and better treat costly, deadly diseases.”

4. Sen. Chris Coons: Scientists Can't Be Silent

On Aug. 4, Sen. Chris Coons (D-Del.) [wrote](#) an article in Science urging scientists to stand up and speak out. Sen. Coons, cofounder of the bipartisan Senate Chemistry Caucus, says scientists across the nation should “make the case for science with the public through online communities and in local meetings and media.” He also suggests that scientists should “fight for scientific literacy by advocating for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education as well as for women and minorities in

STEM fields.” The Senator closes by calling the scientific community to action, saying, “Scientists simply can’t be silent, or else science truly will be silenced.”

5. Discovery Documentary “First in Human” Looks into NIH Clinical Center

Discovery is set to premier “First in Human” on August 10, which is a three-part documentary on the NIH Clinical Center. According to an [NIH news release](#), the documentary provides an “unprecedented, first-hand look at the successes and setbacks that are a part of developing brand-new medicines that may ultimately benefit millions worldwide.” The documentary is narrated by Jim Parsons and will air on Aug. 10, 17, and 24 at 9pm ET/PT.

6. NIH Director Discusses Improvements at NIH Clinical Center

On July 31, NIH Director Francis Collins, MD, PhD, [praised](#) the NIH Clinical Center staff for “achieving the highest standards in patient care and safety, while carrying out cutting edge research protocols in the ‘House of Hope’.” The comments from Dr. Collins come as the NIH Clinical Center recently hit patient safety and clinical quality improvement [benchmarks](#) that are meant to insure safety throughout the clinical center. New protocols include daily patient safety huddles and a new safety tracking system, among others.

7. Golden Goose Awards

The [Golden Goose Awards](#) celebrate the stories of how basic research delivers major societal impacts – from NIH-funded [massages for baby rats](#) that changed how we treat premature babies (and saved billions in health care costs) to the once canceled NIH-funded [adolescent health study](#) that informs everything from school curricula to public health programs. Each year, three teams of researchers are showcased through written stories and documentary videos, and honored with an award ceremony in Washington, DC each fall. The award depends on the support of partners in the science community, and more than twenty different organizations in our community and beyond contribute each year. Attached are the 2017 Golden Goose Award Sponsorship opportunities (also on the Golden Goose Awards [website](#)). The deadline for sponsoring is Sept 6.

8. Join the 2017 Rally for Medical Research Hill Day: Sept. 13-14

[Registration](#) for the Rally for Medical Research is now open. For five consecutive years, the Rally for Medical Research Hill Day has raised awareness during a critical time about the urgent need for an increased investment in the NIH to improve health, spur more progress, inspire more hope and save more lives. The Rally for Medical Research Hill Day is scheduled to take place on Thursday, Sept. 14, in Washington, DC. A reception will take place on Wednesday, Sept. 13 on Capitol Hill from 5:30 to 7:30 pm following a Hill Day training session at 3:00 pm at the [Grand Hyatt](#). Additionally, a hotel room block has been reserved on a first come, first served basis at the Grand Hyatt, Washington DC. Specific questions may be directed to info@rallyformedicalresearch.org and for organizations interested in sponsoring the event, more information is available at: <http://rallyformedicalresearch.org/Pages/Hill-Day-Sponsors-2017.aspx>. Follow the Rally on Twitter @RallyforNIH or join the group on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/RallyMedRes/>

9. NSABB Workshop on Policy for Institutional Oversight of Life Sciences Dual Use Research of Concern

On Sept. 25-26, the NIH and the National Science Advisory Board for Biosecurity (NSABB) will co-host a workshop to engage with stakeholders and facilitate information sharing among research institutions

regarding their approaches to, and experiences with, implementing the [United States Government Policy for Institutional Oversight of Life Sciences Dual Use Research of Concern \(DURC\)](#).

This two-day workshop will involve discussions with diverse institutional representatives and facilitate the sharing of experiences including strategies, best practices, challenges, and solutions regarding policy implementation and the identification and management of DURC. While webcasting will not be available, the meeting will be recorded for future viewing on the [OSP Website](#). For additional details and to register please visit the [workshop website](#). Email Kevin Ramkissoon (ramkissoonkr@od.nih.gov) for questions.

10. 14th Annual AERA Brown Lecture In Education Research with Alfredo J. Artiles

The American Educational Research Association (AERA) invites you to its [Annual Brown Lecture in Education Research](#). This lecture is designed to feature the important role of research in advancing understanding of equality and equity in education. This year's featured speaker is Alfredo Artiles, PhD, dean of graduate education and the Ryan C. Harris professor of special education at Arizona State University. Dr. Artiles is a leading scholar on understanding and addressing educational inequities related to the intersections of disability with other sociocultural differences. The lecture will take place from 6 to 9 p.m. ET on Oct. 19 at the Ronald Reagan Building & International Trade Center (1300 Pennsylvania Ave NW Washington, DC). You may RSVP at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/14th-annual-aera-brown-lecture-in-education-research-tickets-35522375381?aff=email072717>. This event is free and open to the public. A buffet reception will follow.

11. SfN Invites You to Its Neurobiology of Disease Workshop

On Nov. 10, The Society for Neuroscience (SfN) will host a [2017 Neurobiology of Disease Workshop](#), "Gene Therapy to Address Unmet Needs in Neurology." This workshop will feature Florian Eichler, MD, Xandra O. Breakefield, PhD, and [others](#) to discuss the breadth of current and emerging gene therapy approaches to treat neurologic disorders such as Alzheimer's disease, ALS, or muscular dystrophy. This workshop embraces the breadth of "gene therapy" including viral vectors, oligonucleotides, and cell therapies used in promising preclinical studies and clinical trials for a variety of neurologic disorders long thought to be incurable. These new methods involve DNA engineering, gene replacement using virus vectors and the patient's own genetically modified cells, oligonucleotides that can "revive" beneficial gene functions or suppress toxic ones, and viruses and cells armed to tackle brain tumors. For question, please email training@sfn.org.

12. FasterCures Convenes "Partnering for Cures" in San Francisco

Since 2009, [Partnering for Cures](#) (P4C) has been convening leaders with the experience, creativity, and motivation needed to transform the medical research system. The event is convened annually by [FasterCures](#), a center of the Milken Institute, and connects decision-makers from across diseases who are motivated by the same mission – to reduce the time and cost of getting new therapies from discovery to patients. *FasterCures* is taking P4C on the road and convening a smaller, cross-sector group of medical research leaders in San Francisco. Registration is now open for P4C San Francisco on Nov. 14. Find out more information at <http://www.partneringforcures.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 Joe Bañez at jbanez@aamc.org or Tannaz Rasouli at trasouli@aamc.org.