Ad Hoc Group Weekly COVID-19 Follow Up
January 14, 2021

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 and general updates. As always, please forward any relevant items to Christa Wagner (chwagner@aamc.org) for inclusion in the publication!

Congressional and NIH News

Biden Prepares to Release COVID-19 Action Plan, Stimulus Proposal

President-elect Biden is expected to share details of the incoming administration’s COVID-19 plan and near-term stimulus proposal the evening of January 14. Roll Call reports that Biden hopes for bipartisan support for his legislative proposal for immediate relief, which is expected to include additional funds for stimulus checks to individuals and for vaccine distribution. An additional COVID-19 legislative proposal to address broader economic relief is expected in the longer term. The AP reports that Biden is expected to share non-legislative actions to combat COVID-19 including more details on a mass vaccination campaign and enhanced federal coordination to combat the virus.

Chairwoman DeLauro Announces Appropriations Committee Clerks

Newly elected House Appropriations Committee Chair Rosa DeLauro (D-Conn.) announced the committee’s clerks for the 117th Congress on January 11. Stephen Steigleder will remain Clerk of the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Subcommittee.

New Republican Members Announced for Appropriations Committee

House Republicans announced new members to the House Appropriations Committee for the 117th Congress as well as subcommittee ranking members. New members to the full committee include Reps. Valadao (Calif.), Reschenthaler (Penn.), Garcia (Calif.), Cline (Va.), Gonzales (Texas), and Hinson (Iowa). Rep. Tom Cole (R-Okl.) will remain ranking member of the Labor-HHS Subcommittee. House Democrats announced new member appointments in December.

NIH Director Discusses Research Paving the Way for 2020 Breakthroughs

NIH Director Francis Collins, MD, PhD, joined former Senator Bill Frist, MD, in A Second Opinion podcast episode to discuss the long process of discovery that leads to medical research breakthroughs. Collins touched on the knowledge generated through the Human Genome Project, and the foundation that research created that allowed for a rapid
response to the emergence of SARS-CoV-2, including mobilization of targeted vaccine development within days of sequencing the viral genome.

**WSJ: Cancer Death Rate in U.S. Falls by Largest Yearly Amount on Record**

The death rate from cancer in the U.S. dropped 2.4% from 2017 to 2018, the biggest single-year decline on record and a sign of the impact of new treatments on lung cancer especially, reported *The Wall Street Journal on January 12*. The statistics come from the *American Cancer Society's 2021 Facts & Figures*. Overall, the cancer mortality rate has fallen 31% since its peak in 1991, with a majority of the death reduction attributed to decreased lung cancer death rates.

**Reminder: NIH Continues to Accept Post-Submission Preliminary Data Through August/October 2021 Councils**

The NIH Office of Extramural Research reminded grantees through a *January 13 blog post* that certain Funding Opportunity Announcements allow for post-submission of preliminary data for August/October 2021 council consideration due to COVID-19 impacts on research. *The post included an infographic* to visualize the peer review process and timelines during COVID-19.

**Upcoming Events**

**Apply for HIV Clinical Training Opportunities – January 19**

*The HIV Medicine Association (HIVMA)* and the *Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA) Foundation* are accepting applications for the *2021 HIV Clinical Fellowship Program*. For the first time, the program is supporting one year of HIV clinical training for full or half-time effort awards to allow greater flexibility for physicians to train in community-based settings. The award supports a stipend of $33,000 for half-time training or $65,000 for full-time, plus funding to cover fringe benefits. Physicians whose communities are underrepresented in medicine or who interested in working in the Southeastern United States are strongly encouraged to apply. Program and application requirements are on the *HIVMA website*, including *recommended competencies* for HIVMA Clinical Fellows. The deadline to apply is Jan. 19, 2021. For more information, please email HIVMA.

**FASEB Webinar: Careers Beyond Academia – January 28**

The Federation of American Societies of Experimental Biology (FASEB) is hosting a webinar on January 28 from 2-3 pm EST on scientific careers beyond academia. Speakers from the National Academies, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill will discuss ideas on how institutions and PIs can better support trainees seeking non-academic career paths. *Please visit the webinar series website* for additional information and to register.

**NEW NIH Council of Councils – January 29**
The NIH Council of Councils is scheduled to meet virtually on January 29, with the meeting open to the public from 11:00am until 5:00pm EST. The meeting will be accessible at videocast.nih.gov. Please see the Federal Register notice and Council of Councils meeting website for additional information.

**Apply for Medical Student HIV, Infectious Diseases Research Grants – February 5**

The Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA) Foundation and HIV Medicine Association (HIVMA) seek applications for the **G.E.R.M (Grants for Emerging Researchers/Clinicians Mentorship) Program** for the 2021-2022 cycle. The program provides grants to medical students to support a mentored clinical learning and/or research project for up to a year, on infectious diseases and HIV related topics under the mentorship of an IDSA or HIVMA member. Applicants must be medical students (first, second or third year) from an accredited allopathic or osteopathic medical school in the U.S. Application information is available from the [IDSA Foundation website](http://www.idsociety.org). Awardees receive a $4,000 stipend to complete their project. The deadline to apply is **February 5, 2021**. Please email HIVMA staff with questions.

**SOBC Capstone Conference – February 22-23**

This capstone research conference will celebrate ten years of the [NIH Science of Behavior Change (SOBC) Common Fund Program](https://nihcommonfund.nih.gov). The goal of the SOBC program is to advance behavior change research through a focus on mechanisms of change and the integration of basic research with applied/interventional research. The capstone conference will highlight innovative examples of behavior change research consistent with SOBC principles, from use-inspired basic research to mechanisms-focused intervention science. The [capstone conference on February 22-23](https://nihcommonfund.nih.gov) will be virtual, open to the public, recorded, archived, and proceedings summarized in a publicly accessible report. The agenda, speaker information, and a link to registration will be available on this website in the coming months.

**Apply for the Sarcoidosis Research Fellowship Grant – February 26**

Applications for 2021-2023 Foundation for Sarcoidosis Research's Fellowship Grant in the amount of $75,000 per year per fellow are due February 26. Additional details and a link to apply are on the [Foundation for Sarcoidosis Research website](https://www.forsarcoidosis.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.

**Funding opportunities specific to COVID-19** lists active and expired funding opportunities across NIH related to SARS-CoV-2/COVID-19 research.

**HHS COVID-19 awards tracking website** including data on awards made by all HHS awarding agencies with supplemental appropriations.

**Combat COVID website** including information for those who have never had COVID-19, have been infected, have recovered, and for health care providers.

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**Job Postings**

**AAMC Seeks Senior Science Policy Analyst**
The Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) seeks a Sr. Science Policy Specialist, to work closely with leadership in the Scientific Affairs team to provide up-to-date information on policy developments affecting biomedical research at member medical schools and teaching hospitals, prepare presentations and communications, and assist in the development of positions and responses to federal requests, especially on National Institutes of Health (NIH) matters. Key issue areas include medical/clinical research infrastructure, training and workforce development and on the issues promoting diversity and combatting sexual harassment in the STEMM workforce. Please visit the full job post for more information and to apply.

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*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.*