

## Ad Hoc Group Weekly Round Up – Jan. 22, 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:

### United for Medical Research ([@UMR4NIH](#))

*Congress: Keep [#medicalresearch](#) momentum going. America needs a budget deal that allows for \$2B boost to [@NIH](#) [#fundhope](#) [#keepNIHstrong](#) [#RaiseTheCaps](#) [@SpeakerRyan](#) [@NancyPelosi](#) [@SenateMajLdr](#) [@chuckschumer](#) [unitedformedicalresearch.com/nih-jobs/](#)*

### 1. HHS Contingency Staffing Plan Issued for Shutdown; New Deal Emerges

On Jan. 22, a new Senate deal emerged that includes a short-term continuing resolution to fund the government through Feb. 8. While the U.S. House of Representatives initially approved a stopgap measure on Jan. 18 ([H.J.Res 125](#)) to fund the government through Feb. 16, 2018, the measure failed in the Senate. Ahead of the expiration of the continuing resolution to fund the government through Jan. 19 ([P.L. 115-56](#)), the Department of Health and Human Services issued a [contingency plan](#) that furloughs approximately half of its employees. The contingency plan notes that the NIH would “continue patient care for current NIH Clinical Center patients, minimal support for ongoing protocols, animal care services to protect the health of NIH animals, and minimal staff to safeguard NIH facilities and infrastructure,” and press reports state that the result is only about 23 percent of its employees would be retained during the shutdown. Prior to the lapse in funding, in a Jan. 18 press [article](#) National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases Director Anthony Fauci, MD, said that unpredictable funding is disruptive to science, noting, “You have experiments that have been going on for months if not years, and then all of a sudden you've got to stop — you can't do that.”

### 2. The Hill Op-Ed: America Must Get Out of the Woods on Medical Research Funding

On Jan. 16, Claire Pomeroy, MD, MBA, president of the Albert and Mary Lasker Foundation, [wrote](#) an op-ed in The Hill that urges readers to support “all the agencies playing critical roles in advancing medical research.” In the article, Dr. Pomeroy points out that “the research pipeline that delivers medicines and healthcare technologies involves an interdependent network of federal agencies,” further asking readers to “support the NIH and the entire network of federal agencies and institutions whose mission is to ensure the public's health.”

### 3. Senate Committees Advances HHS Secretary and Assistant Secretary Nominees

On Jan. 17, the Senate Finance Committee [advanced](#) the nomination of Alex Azar to serve as the Secretary Health and Human Services (HHS). The committee approved Azar's nomination on a vote of 15-12, with Sen. Tom Carper (D-Del.) joining the Republican majority in support. Azar's nomination is expected to receive floor time before the full Senate before the end of the month.

Similarly, on Jan. 18, the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) committee approved the nomination of Brett Girior, MD, to be HHS Assistant Secretary for Health.

#### **4. Washington University School of Medicine: “Pediatric Physician-scientists Struggle for Funding”**

On Jan. 16, the Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis shared a [news release](#) that discusses how a lack of NIH funding hurts young physician-scientists. Speaking broadly about the impact to research, Misty Good, MD, an assistant professor of pediatrics at Washington University and an author of the study stated that a lack of funding “may prevent the discovery of potential treatments and preventive strategies for patients.” The article raises concern about the impact of developing young trainees sharing that “most NIH grants awarded to researchers in pediatrics during the past five years have been limited to physicians in senior positions at a small number of institutions.”

#### **5. UK Study Shows Economic Value of Medical Research**

On Jan. 16, a Brunel University London and King’s College London [study](#) showed the economic value of investing in medical research. The research lead, Emeritus Professor Martin Buxton who is former director of Brunel’s Health Economics Research Group said, “The studies we have done address the important question as to whether there is an economic return on the totality of research spending in a broad area. And for the three areas of medical research that we have studied, that clearly is the case.”

#### **6. NIH Directors Blog: “Got a Great Research Idea? ‘All of Us’ Wants to Hear It!”**

On Jan. 11, Francis Collins, MD, PhD, shared a new [post](#) on the NIH Director’s Blog calling for input on research ideas for the [All of Us](#) Research Program. The NIH run program aims to provide a diverse dataset to help speed up research on various health conditions. According to the website, research ideas for the program “will be considered at a Research Priorities Workshop in March 2018 and ultimately help us build out the All of Us research platform.” To submit an idea, visit <https://allofusresearchpriorities.ideascale.com/>.

#### **7. 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](http://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.

#### **8. 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](mailto:jbanez@aamc.org) or Tannaz Rasouli at [trasouli@aamc.org](mailto:trasouli@aamc.org).*