



THE AD HOC GROUP FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH

Ad Hoc Group Weekly Round Up

February 3, 2020

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 we welcome suggestions from the community for future issues of the Weekly Round Up. Here is this week's featured tweet:

American Heart Association @American Heart February 1

Cardiovascular disease is the nation's No. 1 killer, but it doesn't have to be that way. February is American [#HeartMonth](#) a time to raise awareness and fight back. <http://spr.ly/601115yXN>.

WSJ: Rep. Cole Op-Ed on Congressional Support for Public Health, Implications for Coronavirus.

Ranking Member of the House Labor-HHS Appropriations Subcommittee [Tom Cole \(R-Okla.\)](#) authored a [January 31 Wall Street Journal opinion piece](#) titled, "Thanks to Congress, America is Prepared for the Coronavirus." Rep. Cole wrote that because of Congress's recent commitment to public health agencies like NIH and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), as well as lessons learned from recent infectious disease outbreaks, "the U.S. is in better shape today than at any other time in recent memory to confront a major public-health crisis." He added, "Many of the methods now being used to prevent the coronavirus from spreading exist because Congress anticipated that the federal government would need to respond quickly to infectious diseases."

NIAID Director Named to President's Coronavirus Task Force

On January 29, President Trump announced the [creation of the President's Coronavirus Task Force](#), including representation by the director of NIH's National Institute on Allergy and Infectious Diseases, Anthony Fauci, MD. According to the press statement, "The Task Force will lead the Administration's efforts to monitor, contain, and mitigate the spread of the virus, while ensuring that the American people have the most accurate and up-to-date health and travel information."

Dr. Fauci has also participated in several video interviews on the coronavirus outbreak, including with the Journal of the American Medical Association and PBS Newshour. The NIAID newsroom has the most updated list of coverage under ["Dr. Fauci in the News."](#)

Representatives Launch Congressional Women in STEM Caucus

The Congressional Women in STEM Caucus was launched on January 30 by Reps. Chrissy Houlahan (D-Pa.), Debbie Lesko (R-Ariz.), Haley Stevens (D-Mich.), and Jackie Walorski, (R-Ind.). According to [Rep. Walorski's press release](#), this bipartisan group is "dedicated to advancing the important role women in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) play in boosting our economy, conducting groundbreaking research that leads to life-changing innovations, and furthering our nation's scientific enterprise."

CDC Data Brief: Life Expectancy Increases for First Time Since 2014

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) published a [final report of U.S. mortality data from 2018](#), showing that life expectancy for the total U.S. population in 2018 was 78.7 years, an increase of 0.1 year from 2017, and the first increase since 2014. According to the report, the death rate decreased between 2017 and 2018 for six of the 10 leading causes of death, including heart disease, cancer, stroke, and Alzheimer's disease.

NIH Names John Ngai Director of NIH BRAIN Initiative

On January 29, [NIH Director Francis Collins, MD, PhD, announced](#) that John J. Ngai, PhD, has been selected as the director of the NIH's Brain Research through Advancing Innovative Neurotechnologies (BRAIN) Initiative, and is expected to begin his new role in March. Dr. Ngai, currently a Coates Family Professor of Neuroscience at the University of California, Berkeley, will "oversee the long-term strategy and day-to-day operations of the initiative as it takes on the challenges of the next five year plan."

Open Mike: Broadening the Pool of NIH Reviewers

Director of the NIH Center for Scientific Review (CSR) Noni Byrnes, PhD, guest-authored a [January 27 Open Mike blog post](#) about the CSR's recent actions to broaden the pool of applicable NIH reviewers. Specifically, CSR "recently removed the requirement to have at least 50% full professors on [grant peer review] committees" in order to diversify the backgrounds and scientific perspectives of the reviewers. Dr. Byrnes explains, "We are now encouraging scientific review officers (SROs) to focus on scientific contributions..., expertise, and breadth instead of trying to meet a career-stage metric."

U.S. Public Views of Genetics: An ASHG Survey

The American Society of Human Genetics (ASHG) on [January 29 released the results](#) of a literature and polling review of public attitudes towards genetic research. [According to the Executive Summary](#) of a survey of over 1,100 Americans, the poll generated seven key findings, including that Americans support federal funding for genetic research, and most Americans are not familiar with key promising areas of research like precision medicine. The [comprehensive literature review](#) is available on ASHG's website.

Upcoming Hill Briefings and Other Events

Registration Open: NIH Workshop on NHP Models and Charting the Path Forward – February 18-19

The [NIH is convening a workshop](#) on the "unique challenges and important generalizable lessons in terms of science, welfare, and ethics" of research on non-human primates

(NHPs) on February 18-19. The workshop will "identify emergent challenges facing the conduct, reproducibility, and translation of rigorous research when working with NHP models and discuss strategies for addressing these challenges, including building on or augmenting current best practices." Additional details regarding the meeting agenda, location, transportation, and lodging options are available on the [travel logistics page](#).

Reeve Summit 2020 – February 26-28

The Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation is hosting its first national conference in Washington, DC, February 26-28. Reeve Summit 2020 will bring together those who have had an extraordinary impact on the lives of people with paralysis and related disabilities, including 300 community members, health professionals and caregivers, and will include powerful keynotes, educational sessions, and opportunities to connect with those who are changing the culture and reality of spinal cord injury. Please contact Kim Beer at kbeer@christopherreeve.org with any questions about the conference. Registration and more information can be found [on the event website](#).

Workshop on Emerging Bioethical Issues in Biomedical Research – February 26

On February 26, NIH will be sponsoring a workshop conducted by the National Academy of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine to examine emerging bioethical issues related to biomedical research. The workshop will begin at 8:30am and take place at 500 Fifth St. NW, or can be viewed via webcast. Please visit the [workshop website](#) for additional details and to register.

Congressional Briefing on Glaucoma Research and Practice – February 26

Please join the Alliance for Eye and Vision Research as they co-host a congressional briefing titled, "The Impact of Federal Funding on Glaucoma Research and Clinical Practice." The briefing will take place on Wednesday, February 26, from 12:00-1:15pm in 2045 Rayburn House Office Building. Please see attached flyer for additional details, and RSVP to [Dina Beaumont](mailto:Dina.Beaumont@nih.gov) at 202-407-8325 or dinabeau@aol.com.

Request for Public Comment on Characteristics of Data Repositories – March 6

The White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) has issued a request for information (RFI) on characteristics of data repositories, on behalf of the multi-agency Subcommittee on Open Science of the National Science and Technology Council's Committee on Science. The proposed set of desirable characteristics for data repositories is part of the Subcommittee's efforts to improve the consistency of information that Federal agencies provide to the scientific community about the long-term preservation of data resulting from Federally funded research. Please visit the [Federal Register post](#) for more information and to submit comments by the March 6 deadline.

NLM Requesting Information on ClinicalTrials.gov Modernization – March 14

The NIH's [National Library of Medicine \(NLM\) is requesting comments](#) on its multi-year plans to modernize [ClinicalTrials.gov](#), which "enhances transparency across the clinical research enterprise" and "helps enhance public trust in clinical research." The

modernization initiative aims to "update the technological infrastructure underlying ClinicalTrials.gov, enhance its public-facing components, and deliver a modern user experience with a platform and services that continue to accommodate growth and enhance efficiency." Comments must be submitted electronically by March 14. Additionally, NLM will host a public meeting on April 30 to elicit further comments.

Social Science Advocacy Day – March 30-31

Please join the Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA) as they hold their annual, coordinated advocacy day in support of all of the social and behavioral sciences. Social Science Advocacy Day brings together social scientists and other science advocates from across the country to engage with policymakers in Washington, DC. The two-day event includes in-depth training and logistical support (including scheduling meetings with Congressional offices and providing an on-call expert to answer your day-of policy questions), as well as polished, up-to-date materials to help you bring your message to Capitol Hill. [Visit the event website](#) for more information and to register.

NIH Regional Seminar in Baltimore, MD: April 20-22, 2020

The NIH is hosting the Spring 2020 NIH Regional Seminar on Program Funding and Grants Administration in Baltimore, MD, from April 20-22. [Visit the meeting website](#) to learn more about the program and to register; early bird registration rates apply through December 31.

Job Postings

APS Seeks Science Policy Analyst

The American Physiological Society seeks a Science Policy Analyst to develop and implement advocacy strategies on issues related to animal research, research funding, and other policy issues. Please review the [position description](#) carefully. You may apply by visiting <https://www.faseb.org/About-FASEB/Careers.aspx> or by emailing a cover letter, resume, and policy-oriented writing sample to resumes@faseb.org.

ASBMB Seeks Federal Affairs Manager

The American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (ASBMB) seeks a Manager, Federal Affairs to join the Public Affairs team. The federal manager will assist in the development and execution of ASBMB public affairs programs with respect to federal science funding agencies; help manage Public Affairs Advisory Committee operations, and work closely with ASBMB public affairs leadership in developing, articulating, communicating and implementing public policy positions on behalf of ASBMB. Visit the [posting of the full job description](#) to learn more and review application instructions.

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.