

Ad Hoc Group Weekly Round Up – March 27, 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:

American Association for Cancer Research (@AACR):

Thank you @ChrisVanHollen for your continued support of @NIH and #CancerResearch, and for standing against proposed cuts to the NIH budget!

<https://twitter.com/ChrisVanHollen/status/845297347542368257>

1. House Labor-HHS Appropriations Hearing on HHS

The House Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Subcommittee [will hold](#) a budget hearing on the Department of Health and Human Services, scheduled for Mar. 29. Secretary Tom Price, MD, is scheduled to testify on behalf of the Department. Of note, on March 17, White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Director Mick Mulvaney sent a [memo](#) to department and agency leaders stating, “Until OMB releases the full FY 2018 Budget, all public comments of any sort should be limited to the information contained in the Budget Blueprint chapter for your agency.”

2. New York Times Op-Ed by Harold Varmus on NIH

On March 22, Former National Institutes of Health (NIH) Director Harold Varmus, MD, [wrote](#) an op-ed in the New York Times reacting to proposed cuts to the NIH. Dr. Varmus shared his views on the president's budget proposal recognizing that “the actual fiscal year 2018 appropriation for the N.I.H. will be determined by Congress” but also stated “it would be a mistake to be complacent about the president's proposal, because it is likely to have real consequences.”

3. House Appropriations L-HHS Chair Tom Cole (R-Okla.) Discusses NIH

During an interview on [Morning Joe](#) on March 27, House Appropriations L-HHS Chair Tom Cole (R-Okla.) was asked about the proposed budget cuts to federally funded research. Responding to the question, Chairman Cole said, “We lose more people to cancer every year than we lost in the Civil War. So this is a national priority and it's something that Republicans and Democrats have worked on together and could bring people together going forward.”

4. Quinnipiac University Poll Finds Majority of Americans Against Cutting Research

On March 24, Quinnipiac University [released](#) a new poll asking American voters for their reaction to the proposed budget cuts put forward by the Trump Administration. According to the release, 87-9 percent of American voters are against cutting funding for medical research and say the proposed cuts are “bad idea.” The president's proposed fiscal year (FY) 2018 budget

blueprint reduces funding for NIH by \$5.8 billion (18 percent) to \$25.9 billion, the lowest level for the agency since FY 2002.

5. Detroit Columnist Highlights Impact of NIH Grants

On March 25, the Detroit Free Press [featured](#) an article by Nancy Kaffer that discussed how NIH grants have benefitted medical innovation. The article calls attention to the invention of heart-lung machines and that important improvements to the effectiveness of the machines were due, in large part, to grants from the NIH. The article also underlines the federal government's unique role in research. "Companies won't get involved until you've proved that this is a new idea that will work ... Almost everything we do in modern medicine started out with NIH grants in drug development or device development or animal testing. It's a wonderful example of using taxpayer money to do good things. If we allocated more money to it, we would be able to make progress a little faster."

6. NIH Announces that Draft Manuscripts are Acceptable for Grant Proposals

On March 24, the NIH [issued](#) an announcement stating that draft manuscripts, or preprints, are acceptable to submit as part of an application for grant funding. The notice states, "The NIH encourages investigators to use interim research products, such as preprints, to speed the dissemination and enhance the rigor of their work." An [article](#) in Science points out that prior to this change, "researchers could include preprints in their research plan but not other parts of their application."

7. FasterCures launches 21st Century Cures Tracker

FasterCures, which is a DC based Center of the Milken Institute, launched a [21st Century Cures Tracker](#). According to the website, the tool was created to track the implementation of sections in Division A of the law, which include the key provisions relevant to biomedical research and innovation. Among other things, the tool will follow the impact of changes to the National Institutes of Health's administrative requirements for grantees.

Separately, FasterCures will host a webinar on the changing organizational culture in research and development. To find out more and RSVP, visit the [webinar website](#).

8. CIBR Hosts 8th Annual Medical Imaging Technology Showcase

On March 28, the Coalition for Imaging and Bioengineering Research (CIBR) will convene academic researchers & scientists, industry partners, and patient groups to discuss how the investment in biomedical imaging research impacts the quality of life for every American citizen. The briefing will take place from 5 – 7 p.m. in 902 Hart Senate Office Building. To RSVP and find more information on the briefing and CIBR, click [here](#).

9. PAA Congressional Lunch Briefing on Rural Demography

The Population Association of America (PAA) will host a Capitol Hill lunch briefing on entitled, “Small Towns/Big Changes: The Shifting Demographics of Rural America. The discussion will be moderated by Robert. A. Moltfitt, Ph.D., from Johns Hopkins University. Several of the panelists are NIH grantees. The briefing is scheduled for April 3 from noon to 1:15 p.m. and will take place in 2045 Rayburn House Office Building. To RSVP and view the briefing invitation, visit the [briefing website](#).

10. AACR Hosts Capitol Hill Briefing on the Road to Cancer Survivorship

On April 4 from noon to 1:30pm, please join the American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) for a briefing entitled, “The Road to Cancer Survivorship: Discover, Predict, Prevent, and Treat.” This briefing will be held in the Capitol Visitors Center, Room 268 (Congressional Meeting Room North). During its Annual Meeting, AACR leaders will brief Members of Congress, their staff and the community on the cutting edge cancer research taking place. It also will provide a forum to discuss priorities and challenges in cancer research today, including a focus on clinical trials, and highlight the perspectives of early-career investigators and cancer survivors. To RSVP for this event, please email govrelations@aacr.org. Lunch provided. Flyer attached.

11. Using Nanotechnology to Target Disease

On Friday, April 7, American Institute for Medical and Biological Engineering (AIMBE) will host a luncheon briefing highlighting what's possible with nanomedicine, such as new cancer treatments, next-gen vaccines, and therapeutics for treating cystic fibrosis and asthma. Speakers include Daniel S. Kohane, M.D., Ph.D., at Harvard Medical School and Boston Children's Hospital, and Warren Chan, Ph.D., at the University of Toronto. This briefing will take place in 2204 Rayburn House Office Building from 12:00 - 1:00 pm. Lunch will be provided. Please RSVP by emailing Sarah Mandell at smandell@aimbe.org. Flyer attached.

12. National Science & Technology Medals Foundation Nominations

The National Science & Technology Medals Foundation announced that nominations for the National Medal of Science and the National Medal of Technology and Innovation are open. Medal of Science nominations can be submitted via [NSF's FastLane system](#) and Medal of Technology and Innovation recommendations can be submitted via [this webform](#). Nominations will be accepted until April 7.

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.