

Ad Hoc Group Weekly Round Up – April 10, 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:

Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) - @AAMCtoday

Investing in the @NIH could bring hope to millions of Americans. <http://action.aamc.org/t/2017-nih>

1. Bipartisan House Letter Advocates for Robust NIH Funding

In a strong showing, 206 House Republicans and Democrats [joined](#) together on a March 31 letter to the House Appropriations Committee in support of a \$2 billion increase over fiscal year (FY) 2017 for NIH in FY 2018. Reps. David McKinley (R-W.Va.), Susan Davis (D-Calif.), Andre Carson (D-Ind.), and Peter King (R-N.Y.) championed the letter. Ad Hoc tweeted, “*Huge thanks to @RepMcKinley @RepSusanDavis @RepAndreCarson @RepPeteKing for supporting investments in the @NIH!*” <http://ow.ly/PvU430aFPhZ> and we encourage you to retweet, thank the leads and all who signed.

2. Reminder of Upcoming Senate Labor-HHS Subcommittee Deadlines

The Senate L-HHS appropriations request deadline is set for May 25. Additionally, the Subcommittee deadline to submit outside witness testimony related to FY 2018 appropriations is close of business on June 2. All testimony must be in accordance with the [guidelines](#) set out by the subcommittee.

3. Reps. Fred Upton (R-Mich.) and Diana DeGette (D-Colo.) Urge Investment in NIH

In a [letter](#) to Office of Management and Budget Director Mick Mulvaney, Reps. Fred Upton (R-Mich.) and Diana DeGette (D-Colo.) supported investments in and voiced opposition to cuts to the NIH in FY 2017 and 2018. Though a [press release](#) issued April 4, Reps. Upton and DeGette argued, “This is not a partisan issue. Disease isn't Democratic or Republican. Congress voted to reinvest in NIH research because we recognize its remarkable return on investment for the American people, and so we oppose any cuts to the NIH budget in FY17 or FY18. NIH research saves lives, creates jobs, controls long-term entitlement costs, protects our national security, and advances our global leadership, all while bringing renewed hope to patients and families across the country.”

4. House and Senate Appropriators Push for NIH Funding Increase

An April 6 [article](#) in the *McClatchy Washington Bureau* highlights the work of appropriations Chairmen, Sen. Roy Blunt (R-Mo.) and Rep. Tom Cole (R-Okla.) on behalf of federal research funding. The piece points out that the two chairmen have been actively advocating for an increase in appropriations for the NIH, saying Chairmen Blunt and Cole will push “for Congress to increase the institutes' annual \$32 billion budget.”

5. NIH Announces May Council of Councils Meeting

The NIH [published](#) a Federal Register Notice regarding a May 26 Council of Councils meeting. The meeting will begin at 8:15 am at the NIH in Building 21, C Wing, 6th floor, Conference Room 10. Among other topics queued up for the meeting, agenda items for the open sessions include a discussion of the history of the Knockout Mouse Program (KOMP), background on NIH and federal budget process, progress and plans at the National Institute on Aging (NIA), and the Common Fund Diversity Program.

The open session will be videocast and can be accessed from the NIH Videocasting and Podcasting Web site <http://videocast.nih.gov>.

6. Applications Open for the 2017 NIMHD Health Disparities Research Institute

The National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD) will host the Health Disparities Research Institute (HDRI) from August 14 - 18. The HDRI aims to support the research career development of promising minority health/health disparities research scientists early in their careers and stimulate research in the disciplines supported by health disparities science. The due date for submitting an application is May 12 at 11:59 pm EST. Visit the NIMHD [website](#) for more information.

7. STAT Op-ed: NIH Budget Cuts will Jeopardize America's Leadership in Medical Research

In an April 7 [opinion piece](#) in *STAT*, Ronald DePinho, MD, past president and professor at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center and vice-chair of ACT for NIH, wrote about the positive impact of NIH investments on the nation. He highlights the benefit of research related to immunotherapy and the impact of its results on former President Jimmy Carter's life. However, Dr. DePinho notes that funding for NIH and biomedical research has "generally been declining," also saying, "The budget for the NIH has eroded by nearly 20 percent since 2003." Dr. DePinho states, "If we wish to remain the preeminent nation for finding cures and treatments for deadly diseases, we cannot afford to flat fund the NIH or reduce its budget, because the march of disease waits for nothing."

8. Open Mike Blog: Maintaining the Confidentiality of Peer Review

On April 7, Mike Lauer, MD, deputy director for NIH Extramural Research and Richard Nakamura, PhD, director of the NIH Center for Scientific Review [wrote](#) in *Open Mike*, Dr. Lauer's NIH blog, about the importance of the NIH peer review process and upholding its integrity. Underscoring the significance of the process, they write, "supporting the public trust in science takes the support of the entire research community. Attempts to influence the outcome of the peer review process through inappropriate or unethical means result in needless expenditure of government funds and resources, and erode public trust in science."

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.