

Ad Hoc Group Weekly Round Up – June 11, 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 we welcome suggestions from the community for future issues of the Weekly Round Up. Here is this week's featured tweet:

University of Chicago Cancer Center [@UCCancerCenter](#)

“Every major advance in cancer care from the last 50 years is due to federally funded [#CancerResearch](#). Please increase funding [@NIH](#) and [@theNCI](#) to help save more lives! [#CancerVoice](#) [#FundNIH](#) [#FundCancerCures](#)”

1. NIH Celebration Event – June 20

Stakeholders from the NIH advocacy community are hosting a reception on Capitol Hill to celebrate biomedical research supported by the NIH, as well as Congress' sustained commitment to NIH. The event will take place on Wednesday, June 20th from 5-7pm in the Kennedy Caucus Room (325 Russell Senate Office Building). Labor-HHS Chairman Roy Blunt and Chairman Tom Cole will present brief remarks, and we welcome your attendance and support at this celebratory event! Please [RSVP here](#) and see the attached flyer for additional details.

2. Rescissions Package Updates

The White House's proposed rescissions package advanced June 7 after successfully passing the House by a margin of 210-206. The bill, [HR 3](#), totaled nearly \$15 billion, though is calculated to save only \$1 billion, according the Congressional Budget Office. This version of the bill removed the controversial cuts to Ebola, Hurricane Sandy recovery, and EPA funding though did retain almost \$2 billion in cuts to the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). The Senate has until June 22 to approve the bill before protections to the filibuster-proof vote expires.

3. NIH Advisory Committee to the Director Meeting – June 14-15

Through a Federal Register [notice](#), the NIH announced a meeting of the Advisory Committee to the Director, National Institutes of Health, scheduled for June 14 and 15. Agenda items include NIH Director's Report, IC Director Report, and ACD Working Group Reports. The meeting will take place at National Institutes of Health, Building 31, 6th Floor Conference Room 6C, 31 Center Drive, Bethesda, MD 20892.

4. *Washington Times*: Why Animal Lovers Should Cheer for Animal Research, Not Oppose It

A *Washington Times* [article](#) discusses the usefulness of animal research in finding new cancer treatments for both animals and humans. The article describes several successful cancer treatments in dogs and cats, and it explains that "human, dog and cat immune systems respond to

diseases in similar ways. So treatments that work on pets can save people's lives too." The commentary is by Matthew Bailey of the Foundation for Biomedical Research.

5. *Washington Post*: High Costs of the Chance to Cure Cancer

Washington Post columnist Megan McArdle [authored an opinion piece](#) on the high costs of new lifesaving immunotherapy treatments for cancer. Her story sheds light on recent advances at the [National Cancer Institute](#) that have used genomics and adoptive cell therapy techniques with miraculous outcomes in some late-stage cancer patients, but with only 15 percent of patients' tumors responding to the treatment. Furthermore, the costs of these personalized treatments fall in the range of a quarter to half a million dollars. The author poses the question of how to put the high costs in perspective when considering the possibility of beating a cancer diagnosis.

6. *NY Times*: A Promising Cancer Treatment Made Patients Worse, Not Better

Denise Grady of the New York Times [authored an article](#) about the still unknown functionality of immunotherapy. This stems from a recently published [letter to the New England Journal of Medicine](#) about adverse events associated with the drug nivolumab in treatment of virally-driven adult T-cell leukemia-lymphoma. She notes that these cases are a "sobering reminder that immunotherapy is still in its early days" and quoted a variety of the treating physicians who noted that the excitement around immunotherapy is also driving a "time of very rapid learning."

7. *STAT*: There are Ways to Speed Up Drug Development

A *STAT* [article](#) by Fred Ledley, MD, Center for Integration of Science and Industry, discusses his team's [study](#) that used mathematical modeling to determine that "a predictable pattern of growth and maturation" is in the drug development process that causes an average time of 30-35 years for biomedical discoveries to enter the marketplace as drugs. While many efforts to accelerate this process focus on expediting late stages of research, their work suggests that "paying more attention to the longest stage — the time required for the underlying technologies to mature — will pay off." Dr. Ledley was an author of a recent [study](#) finding that all new drugs approved by FDA from 2010-2016 drew from NIH-supported basic research.

8. *American Institute of Physics*: US Physics Doctoral Programs See Drop in International Applicants

The American Institute of Physics (AIP) recently [conducted a survey](#) of 74 U.S. physics PhD programs with at least 10 graduates each year. The survey asked for number of international applicants received in 2017 compared to 2018 and discovered a 12 percent decline, on average, in international applicants between successive years. Another survey cited in AIP's study cited the visa application process as the number one reason for declining international enrollees.

9. Semiannual Inventory of HHS Rulemaking

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) June 11 released a semiannual inventory of rulemaking actions within the department. The [entire list](#) can be found in the Federal Register announcement.

10. NIH RFI on Trans-NIH Strategic Plan for HIV and Related Research

Through a Federal Register [notice](#), the NIH May 21 announced a request for information (RFI) for the development of the fiscal year 2021-2023 trans-NIH strategic plan for HIV and HIV-related research. The public comment period is open until June 20.

11. NIGMS RFI on Enhancing Postdoctoral Career Transitions

The National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS) May 24 released a [Request for Information \(RFI\)](#) on strategies for enhancing postdoctoral career transitions to promote faculty diversity. Responses are due on July 20th.

Upcoming Hill Briefings and Events

12. Briefing: Vital Public-Private Partnership in Kidney Care – June 12

Please join the Congressional Kidney Caucus June 12 from 12:30-1:30pm in 2123 Rayburn HOB to learn more about the public health crisis kidney diseases pose for our society, and the Federal government's crucial role in providing access to life-sustaining treatment for Americans with kidney disease, kidney failure and kidney transplants. Speakers and participants representing the Congressional Kidney Caucus, the Administration, NIH and the kidney community will tie together the public and private initiatives, incentives and investments – both underway and still needed – that will pave the way for the most effective and efficient treatments and innovations. Please RSVP to Matthew Powell at matt.powell@mail.house.gov and see attached flyer for additional details.

13. Research!America Briefing: Overcoming Gaps in the Treatment of Mental Illness – June 13

Join Research!America, the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI), National Hispanic Medical Association, and the National Medical Association June 13 from 12-1pm in 325 Russell SOB as we explore advances in patient centered research that are working to improve mental health care, particularly for chronically underserved populations. *Overcoming Gaps in the Treatment of Mental Illness: The Role of Patient-centered Research* will share timely developments that can help ensure crucially important mental health services reach those in need. To RSVP email Jacqueline, jlagoy@researchamerica.org and see attached flyer for more details.

14. AIMBE Briefing: A New Approach to the Opioid Epidemic – June 15

The opioid epidemic has cost the U.S. more than a trillion dollars since 2001, and may exceed another \$500 billion over the next three years. Please join AIMBE and the Research & Development Caucus June 15 from 12-1pm in 2044 Rayburn HOB for an important discussion

about how biomedical engineers are working to solve this problem through research and development supported by federal science agencies, including the National Institutes of Health (NIH). RSVP to smandell@aimbe.org and see attached flyer for more details.

15. 70th Anniversary of NHLBI Celebration – June 28

The American Heart Association, American Lung Association, American Society of Hematology, American Thoracic Society, and WomenHeart; The National Coalition for Women With Heart Disease et. al invite you to celebrate: The 70th Anniversary of the NIH's National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute. The event will be held June 28, from 5:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. in the Kennedy Caucus Room, 325 Russell Senate Office Building. Brief remarks will be made by NIH Director Francis Collins, M.D., Ph.D. (Invited); Gary Gibbons, M.D., director of the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute; and Eugene Braunwald, M.D., Brigham and Women's Hospital, Harvard Medical School. Please RSVP to Lesia Griffin, griffin@hmcw.org and see attached flyer for additional details.

16. Dry Eye Awareness Month Congressional Briefing – July 11

Please join the Alliance for Eye and Vision Research (AEVR) and the Tear Film & Ocular Surface Society (TFOS) at a Congressional briefing and screening for Dry Eye Awareness Month. The events will take place on Wednesday July 11, in 2168 Rayburn HOB. Please RSVP to dinabeau@aol.com and see attached flyer for more details.

17. Celebrate Life Science Fair and Reception on Capitol Hill – July 18

The Coalition for the Life Sciences (CLS) and FASEB will host the first Celebrate Life Science Fair and reception on Capitol Hill. The Life Science Fair will be held July 18, from 5pm – 7pm, in 2043 and 2044 Rayburn House Office Building. The Life Science Fair is an opportunity for the biomedical research community to engage Members of Congress and their staff about how scientific progress advances public health. Scientists will showcase their work, and attendees will have the opportunity to engage in hands-on experiments that bridge the gap between science and the society it serves. This event is open to the public; participation is not limited to CLS or FASEB members. Opportunities are limited due to room space. Please contact either Lynn Marquis (lmarquis@coalitionforlifesciences.org) or Jennifer Zeitzer (jzeitzer@faseb.org) for additional information. Please see the attached flyer for details and sponsorship opportunities.

18. Call for Golden Goose Award Nominations

The Golden Goose Award team is accepting nominations for the 2018 year. The Golden Goose Awards honor 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 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.