

Ad Hoc Group Weekly Round Up – July 24, 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:

United for Medical Research (@UMR4NIH)

#NIH-funded research is working to make [#AmazingThings](#) possible like saving lives & reducing healthcare costs. <http://www.amazingthingspodcast.com/episodes/2016/8/31/vadim-backman-detecting-cancer-at-its-earliest-stages>

1. Lawmakers Advance House FY 2018 Labor-HHS Bill Out of Committee

On July 19, the full House Appropriations Committee [approved](#) its fiscal year (FY) 2018 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education (Labor-HHS) appropriations bill on a 28-22 party line vote. The measure, passed by the Labor-HHS Subcommittee last week, provides \$34.7 billion in base funding for NIH, a \$943.4 million (2.8 percent) increase over the comparable FY 2017 funding level. The bill also utilizes the \$496 million designated for specific NIH initiatives in the Innovation Account established in the 21st Century Cures Act (P.L. 114-255), bringing the bill's total NIH funding level to \$35.2 billion in FY 2018. Through a [press release](#), House Appropriations Chair Rodney Frelinghuysen (R-N.J.) highlighted the NIH boost in the bill saying, "For a third consecutive year, it allocates a significant funding increase of \$1.1 billion for the National Institutes of Health, which will benefit a wide range of biomedical programs, including public health preparedness and readiness in biodefense, and research programs to find cures spanning from cancer to Alzheimer's." The Ad Hoc Group [issued a statement](#) prior to Subcommittee action expressing appreciation for the Subcommittee's support of the NIH, but also expressed a need to increase spending caps to ensure strong, predictable funding growth above inflation.

2. House Budget Committee Approves FY 2018 Budget Resolution

On July 19, the House Budget Committee [approved](#) its FY 2018 [budget resolution](#), setting the overall FY 2018 discretionary spending allocation to \$1.132 trillion, including \$511 billion for nondefense spending and \$621.5 billion for defense. The proposal, approved on a vote of 24-14, gives a \$72.5 billion boost over the defense cap enacted in the Budget Control Act. Budget Chair Diane Black (R-Tenn.) said that this budget resolution "takes real steps to put our country on a sound fiscal path that balances in ten years and will allow us to start paying down the national debt." In contrast, in a [statement](#) issued after the committee passed the bill, Committee Ranking Member John Yarmuth (D-Ky.) says the budget resolution "puts at risk investments in nearly every national priority" including medical research. Included in the resolution was a policy statement on biomedical research that stated, "the House should continue to support the critical work of medical innovators throughout the country through continued funding for agencies, including the National Institutes of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, to conduct life-saving research and development," while also facilitating private-sector efforts by "removing regulatory obstacles that impede the adoption of new medical technology and pharmaceuticals." Separately, House Appropriators voted on July 19 to formalize the [interim allocations](#) each of the subcommittees has used for their spending bills in the absence of a House-approved budget resolution. The discretionary total adopted by the House Appropriations Committee aligns with the \$1.132 trillion in the House Budget Committee mark. Similarly, Senate Appropriators approved their FY 2018 allocations, keeping overall discretionary funding at the FY 2017 level of \$1.07 trillion, including the current split between defense (\$551 billion) and nondefense (\$518.5 billion) funding.

3. Bill Gates Writes About His Visit to NIH Vaccine Research Center

In a GatesNotes [article](#), Bill Gates talks about his visit to the NIH's Vaccine Research Center and highlights how scientists are working to make headway on important biomedical research. Gates discusses his firsthand look at how researchers are using virtual reality to improve vaccines. He also underscores the positive impact the NIH has had on HIV/AIDS, cancer, Ebola, Zika, and malaria. Gates states, "To me, the ability of science to prevent and cure disease is magical—and the magic starts in places like the NIH. By advancing our understanding of biology, their work lays the foundation for innovation by private drug companies and biotech firms ... Then those innovations lead to new jobs, new industries, and economic growth." Through a [tweet](#), Gates reminded his followers that "every state has received funding from the NIH."

4. Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research Joins Science Group Letter on FY18 Spending Caps

The Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research [joined](#) a group of 16 science advocacy coalitions on a July 18 letter asking congressional leadership to consider spending cap increases for FY 2018. In a letter to House and Senate leadership, the letter asks lawmakers to "reaffirm your commitment to scientific research by crafting a budget agreement that raises the spending caps for defense and non-defense discretionary programs."

5. AAMC Releases New "Bench to Bedside" Podcast Episode

On July 18, the Association of American Medical Colleges [published](#) a new Bench to Bedside Podcast entitled, "A Clinical Trial Offers New Hope for a Young Cancer Patient." The Bench to Bedside Podcast series covers stories of patients who have benefited from medical research. This episode covers a young cancer patient's journey through treatment and clinical trials, and shows how both public and private funding are vital to supporting medical research.

6. Friends of NIDA Briefing on Opioid Use Disorder Prevention Methods

The Friends of NIDA, in cooperation with the Congressional Addiction, Treatment and Recovery Caucus, the Prescription Drug Abuse Caucus, and the Bipartisan Heroin Task Force, invite you to a congressional lunch briefing entitled, "Preventing Opioid Use Disorders: Community Based Approaches that Work." This briefing discussion will cover prevention research funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) along with community-based and focused prevention approaches that have yielded positive outcomes to help reduce the impact of the opioid epidemic. This briefing is scheduled for July 25 from 12 to 1:30pm in 2226 Rayburn House Office Building. [Use this link to RSVP](#). For questions, contact Cynthia Malley at cmalley@apa.org.

7. Golden Goose Awards

The [Golden Goose Awards](#) celebrate the stories of how basic research delivers major societal impacts – from NIH-funded [massages for baby rats](#) that changed how we treat premature babies (and saved billions in health care costs) to the once canceled NIH-funded [adolescent health study](#) that informs everything from school curricula to public health programs. Each year, three teams of researchers are showcased through written stories and documentary videos, and honored with an award ceremony in Washington, DC each fall. The award depends on the support of partners in the science community, and more than twenty different organizations in our community and beyond contribute each year. Attached are the 2017 Golden Goose Award Sponsorship opportunities (also on the Golden Goose Awards [website](#)). The deadline for sponsoring is Sept 6.

8. Join the 2017 Rally for Medical Research Hill Day: Sept 13-14

[Registration](#) for the Rally for Medical Research is now open. For five consecutive years, the Rally for Medical Research Hill Day's has raised awareness during a critical time about the urgent need for an increased investment in the NIH to improve health, spur more progress, inspire more hope and save more lives. The Rally for Medical Research Hill Day is scheduled to take place on Thursday, Sept. 14, in Washington D.C. A reception will take place on Wednesday, Sept. 13 on Capitol Hill from 5:30 to 7:30 pm following a Hill Day training session at 3:00 pm at the [Grand Hyatt](#). Additionally, a hotel room block has been reserved on a first come, first served basis at the Grand Hyatt, Washington DC. Specific questions may be directed to info@rallyformedicalresearch.org and for organizations interested in sponsoring the event, more information is available at: <http://rallyformedicalresearch.org/Pages/Hill-Day-Sponsors-2017.aspx>. Follow the Rally on Twitter @RallyforNIH or join the group on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/RallyMedRes/>

9. NSABB Workshop on Policy for Institutional Oversight of Life Sciences Dual Use Research of Concern

On September 25-26, the NIH and the National Science Advisory Board for Biosecurity (NSABB) will co-host a workshop to engage with stakeholders and facilitate information sharing among research institutions regarding their approaches to, and experiences with, implementing the [United States Government Policy for Institutional Oversight of Life Sciences Dual Use Research of Concern \(DURC\)](#). This two-day workshop will involve discussions with diverse institutional representatives and facilitate the sharing of experiences including strategies, best practices, challenges, and solutions regarding policy implementation and the identification and management of DURC. While webcasting will not be available, the meeting will be recorded for future viewing on the [OSP Website](#). For additional details and to register please visit the [workshop website](#). Email Kevin Ramkissoon (ramkissoonkr@od.nih.gov) for questions.

10. FasterCures Convenes “Partnering for Cures” in San Francisco

Since 2009, [Partnering for Cures](#) (P4C) has been convening leaders with the experience, creativity, and motivation needed to transform the medical research system. The event is convened annually by [FasterCures](#), a center of the Milken Institute, and connects decision-makers from across diseases who are motivated by the same mission – to reduce the time and cost of getting new therapies from discovery to patients. *FasterCures* is taking P4C on the road and convening a smaller, cross-sector group of medical research leaders in San Francisco. Registration is now open for P4C San Francisco on Nov. 14. Find out more information at <http://www.partneringforcures.org/>.

11. Job Opening: Communications Manager at FASEB

The Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB), a non-profit scientific organization, seeks a Communications Manager to develop, implement, and maintain a comprehensive public relations program for the Office of Public Affairs, including managing FASEB social media accounts and programs. A [position description](#) is available on FASEB's website. Applications can be submitted online through the [FASEB Employment Opportunities portal](#). NOTE: this position is different than the Director of Communications opportunity that was advertised in April.

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.