

## Ad Hoc Group Weekly Round Up – September 24, 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:

### Senator Roy Blunt [@RoyBlunt](#)

Congress is on track to send the [4th consecutive increase](#) for live-saving, cost-saving [@NIH](#) research to the president's desk.

#### 1. Senate Votes and Passes FY 2019 Labor-HHS Bill

The Senate Sept. 18 voted to approve, [93-7](#), the [compromise agreement](#) on the FY 2019 Labor-HHS and Defense spending bills ([H.R. 6157](#)), which adopts the Senate-passed \$39.1 billion funding level for the NIH, representing a \$2 billion (5.4 percent) increase, including funding provided through the 21st Century Cures Act. Following the vote, the Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research published a [statement](#) noting that the combined Labor-HHS and Defense conference agreement, coupled with the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 passed in early February paved the way to “four years of notable funding increases for the NIH, [which] keenly reflects the sustainable, predictable growth above inflation necessary to realize the invaluable promise of new cures, diagnostics, preventions, and treatments offered through NIH.” The Ad Hoc Group sent a Sept. 24 letter to all Representatives urging their support for the House-Senate conference agreement. The House is expected to vote the week of Sept. 24, before sending to the president in advance of the end of the fiscal year on Sept. 30.

#### 2. NIH Publishes FY 2018 Mechanism Table

The NIH has published its [FY 2018 Mechanism Table](#), showing FY 2018 grant numbers and total funding as of May 14, 2018, compared to the FY 2017 final allocation.

#### 3. NIH Releases Bypass Budget Proposal for FY 2020

Earlier this summer, the NIH released its [FY 2020 NIH Professional Judgment Budget for Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias](#) which is submitted directly to Congress separately from the NIH's overall budget request. This Bypass Budget gives an update on the goal of preventing and effectively treating Alzheimer's disease by 2025. The updated document estimates that NIA will need \$2.393 billion in FY 2020 to continue towards this goal. The [budget website](#) links to additional materials including an [executive summary](#), [budget milestones](#), and [research implementation milestones](#).

#### 4. Additional Updates on NIH Sexual Harassment Policy

The NIH Sept. 17 launched an [anti-sexual harassment website](#) and published a statement with updates to the NIH sexual harassment policy. NIH Director Francis Collins, MD, PhD, Sept. 19 shared [an additional update](#) following the National Science Foundation's (NSF) publication of a new policy. Dr. Collins writes that “ideally, all granting agencies of the U.S. government that support scientific research should adopt consistent approaches to the problem of sexual harassment.” Dr. Collins's first steps toward that goal include working with the National Science and Technology Council Committee on Science on anti-sexual harassment measures, and

establishing a working group to the Advisory Committee to the Director (ACD) to guide NIH's policies on sexual harassment.

#### **5. NIH Director Update: The HEAL Initiative**

NIH Director Francis Collins, MD, PhD, Sept. 19 [published a statement](#) with updates on the NIH Helping to End Addiction Long-term (HEAL) Initiative, in recognition of Sept. 17-23 as Prescription Opioid and Heroin Epidemic Awareness Week. The HEAL Initiative was launched in April 2018 as a “a trans-NIH effort to speed scientific solutions to stem the national opioid public health crisis.” Notable updates thus far include establishment of the Acute to Chronic Pain Signatures Program to understand the origins of chronic pain, and a variety of new funding opportunities to study behavioral interventions to prevent opioid use disorder, to validate new pain targets, to identify biomarkers, and to develop a new method for evaluating medications during clinical trials.

#### **6. NIH Director's Blog: Understanding the Common Cold**

NIH Director Francis Collins, MD, PhD, Sept. 18th published a [new blog post](#), “Possible Explanation for Why Some People Get More Colds.” The post reviews a recent NIH-funded study that discovered that epithelial cells lining nasal passages and lungs both have anti-viral defense mechanisms, but that the anti-viral response was stronger in nasal cells. They probed further to show that cells exposed to other challenges such as cigarette smoke or allergens are not as effective at fighting off viral infections. Dr. Collins concludes, “The discovery may help to explain why smokers and those with allergies or other chronic conditions tend to get more severe viral infections than other people do. The hope is these insights will ultimately lead to strategies to improve the body's natural defenses so that more people stay healthy even after exposure to cold viruses.”

### **Upcoming Hill Briefings and Events**

#### **7. AEVR Hill Briefing on Age-Related Macular Degeneration – Sept. 27**

Please join the Alliance for Eye and Vision Research (AEVR) for a Hill briefing titled, “Understanding the ‘Dry’ Form of Age-Related Macular Degeneration (AMD) To Develop Effective Treatments.” The event will take place Sept. 27 from 12-1:15pm in 2060 Rayburn House Office Building. Please RSVP to [dinabeau@aol.com](mailto:dinabeau@aol.com) and see the attached flyer for additional information.

#### **8. AEVR 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reception – Sept. 27**

Please join AEVR for its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration and poster session, including 21 Emerging Vision Scientists in the U.S. The reception will be held on Sept. 27 from 5:30-7:30pm in the Rayburn House Foyer. Please RSVP to [dinabeau@aol.com](mailto:dinabeau@aol.com) and see the attached flyer for additional details.

#### **9. One Voice Against Cancer Hill Briefing – Oct. 4**

One Voice Against Cancer (OVAC), a coalition of public interest groups representing millions of cancer researchers, patients, survivors and their families, is pleased to invite you to a Congressional Lunch Briefing with National Cancer Institute (NCI) Director Dr. Norman Sharpless. This briefing, "On the Horizon: Opportunities & Challenges in Cancer Research," will

highlight the progress that we've already made in the fight against cancer while also outlining those challenges that are still left to be addressed. Please see attached for additional information, and be sure to [RSVP here](#).

#### **10. NIEHS Hill Briefing: A Healthy Start for Every Child – Oct. 10**

Please join the Friends of NIEHS for a U.S. Congress briefing titled, “A Healthy Start for Every Child: How the Environment Influences Health and Development,” featuring NIEHS Director Linda Birnbaum, Ph.D. The event will take place Wednesday, October 10, 2018 12:30p.m. – 2:00pm p.m. in the Rayburn House Office Building, Room 2045. Please RSVP to [dcrsvp@thoracic.org](mailto:dcrsvp@thoracic.org) and see the attached invitation for more information.

#### **11. Panel Study of Income Dynamics 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reception – Oct. 18**

Please join the Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID) in celebrating it's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary during an Oct. 18<sup>th</sup> reception. The event will take place at the Newseum from 6:30 – 9pm. Please RSVP to [pthall@umich.edu](mailto:pthall@umich.edu) and see the attached flyer for additional details.

#### **12. NASEM: Upcoming Meeting on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Academia**

The National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) will [convene leaders](#) including “academic leaders, Title IX and diversity officers, ombudsmen, researchers in sexual harassment, and leaders from professional societies, foundations, and federal agencies to discuss strategies and share promising practices” to discuss sexual harassment in academia. The meeting will be held Nov. 9, 2018, from 9:00am – 5:00pm in Washington DC, and will focus on developing strategies on how to prevent sexual harassment in academia.

#### **13. Learn Serve Lead – Nov. 2-6, 2018**

Learn Serve Lead 2018 - the AAMC Annual Meeting is open for registration. The Nov. 2-6 event takes place in Austin, Texas and will draw 4500-plus attendees including a wide range of stakeholders. In addition to [four plenary sessions](#) including Grit author and researcher Angela Duckworth, PhD, and civil and women's rights leader Anita Hill, JD, there are more than 130 concurrent sessions. Some of the slated sessions include:

- Improving Population Health Through Learner-Engaged Research
- Rightsizing Research Infrastructure
- Achieving Health Equity through Research: Innovations From NIMHD-Funded Science
- Unhealthy Politics: The Battle over Evidence-Based Medicine

[Registration](#) is available online through Thursday, Nov. 1.

### **Job Postings**

#### **FASEB Seeks Science Policy Analyst**

The Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB) is hiring a [Science Policy Analyst](#) to develop policy positions related to promoting the interests of investigators in the biological and biomedical sciences. The individual will write position statements, meeting summaries, and reports and serve as a liaison to FASEB Science Policy Subcommittees and task forces, in addition to monitoring the Federal Register and attending federal agency

meetings. The position is full time, includes benefits, and is located at FASEB headquarters in Bethesda, MD. PhD preferred. Interested applicants can [apply online](#).

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](mailto:chwagner@aamc.org) or Tannaz Rasouli at [trasouli@aamc.org](mailto:trasouli@aamc.org).