

Ad Hoc Group Weekly Round Up – October 16, 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:

Ivanka Trump (@IvankaTrump)

Congratulations to the many @NIH grantees awarded the #NobelPrize this year. RT: [@NIHDirector](#) Congrats to long-time #NIH grantees Drs. Hall, Rosbash&Young on '17 #NobelPrize for research into circadian rhythm!

1. Eric Hargan Named Acting Secretary of Health and Human Services

One week after the Senate [confirmed](#) Eric D. Hargan to serve as deputy secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the White House [announced](#) that Mr. Hargan will serve as acting secretary for the Department. He takes over for Don Wright, who was named HHS Acting Secretary on Sept. 29 after the resignation of former Secretary Tom Price. Mr. Hargan previously served in various roles at HHS during George W. Bush's presidency, including deputy general counsel, principal associate deputy secretary and as acting deputy secretary.

2. HHS Highlights NIH Nobel Prize Winning Researchers

On Oct. 13, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office of Public Affairs posted a [blog](#) highlighting four NIH-supported scientists who were 2017 Nobel Prize recipients. Three researchers, Jeffrey C. Hall, PhD, of the University of Maine; Michael Rosbash, PhD, of Brandeis University; and Michael W. Young, PhD, of Rockefeller University were awarded the 2017 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for their research on molecular mechanisms that control circadian rhythm. The fourth recipient, Joachim Frank, PhD, received the 2017 Nobel Prize in Chemistry. Dr. Frank was jointly awarded the Nobel Prize with Jacques Dubochet, PhD, from the University of Geneva and University of Basel, and Richard Henderson, PhD, from Cambridge University for the development of a cryo-electron microscopy technique.

3. NIH Announces Public-Private Partnership on Immunotherapy Initiative

On Oct. 12, the NIH [announced](#) that it plans to partner with 11 biopharmaceutical companies with the goal of developing new cancer immunotherapy strategies. The partnership, called the "Partnership for Accelerating Cancer Therapies (PACT) and part of the Cancer Moonshot announced last year, is a five-year collaboration that will be managed by the Foundation for the National Institutes of Health. In a statement, NIH Director Francis Collins, MD, PhD, says that "We have seen dramatic responses from immunotherapy, often eradicating cancer completely for some cancer patients ... We need to bring that kind of success — and hope — for more people

and more types of cancers, and we need to do it quickly. A systematic approach like PACT will help us to achieve success faster.”

4. Open Mike Blog: Implementing a New Human Subject and Clinical Trial Information Form

On Oct. 11, NIH’s Deputy Director for Extramural Research Mike Lauer, MD [wrote](#) a blog post on “Implementing a New Human Subject and Clinical Trial Information Form.” Dr. Lauer recounts a previous blog post that [discussed](#) transparency and clinical trials, and cites a March 2016 [GAO report](#) that stated, “NIH is limited in its ability to make data-driven decisions regarding the use of its roughly \$3 billion annual investment in clinical trials.” Ultimately, Dr. Lauer writes that the new form is intended to help flag trials and capture information, among other items. NIH also created a [new video](#) that guides users through the new form.

5. The Atlantic: The Decline of the Midwest's Public Universities Threatens to Wreck Its Most Vibrant Economies

On Oct. 15, Jon Marcus [authored](#) an article in The Atlantic that described the impact of university research and how funding for institutions have not kept pace. Marcus says, “University research is in trouble, and so is an economy more dependent on it than many people understand. Federal funding for basic research—more than half of it conducted on university campuses like this one—has effectively declined since 2008, failing to keep pace with inflation.” Underscoring this fact, Marcus highlights that, “This is before taking into account Trump administration proposals to slash the National Science Foundation (NSF) and National Institutes of Health (NIH) budgets by billions of dollars more.”

6. Forbes: How China Is Catching Up To A U.S. Science & Tech Sector Uncertain Of Its Future

On Oct. 4, Forbes [featured](#) an article by Denis Simon, PhD, executive vice chancellor of Duke Kunshan University, which points out the growth of China’s investment in research & development (R&D). Dr. Simon notes that “China has risen rapidly to become the world’s second-largest performer and today accounts for 20% of global R&D expenditure.” In contrast, Dr. Simon says that the White House has not prioritized science and technology – pointing towards proposed cuts and the fact that the president lacks a presidential science advisor. He says, “This lack of focus in the U.S. presents an opportunity for China to establish a more central role in the rapidly evolving global innovation system.”

7. 14th Annual AERA Brown Lecture In Education Research – Oct. 19

The American Educational Research Association (AERA) invites you to its [Annual Brown Lecture in Education Research](#). This lecture is designed to feature the important role of research in advancing understanding of equality and equity in education. This year’s featured speaker is Alfredo Artiles, PhD, dean of graduate education and the Ryan C. Harris professor of special education at Arizona State University. Dr. Artiles is a leading scholar on understanding and addressing educational inequities related to the intersections of disability with other sociocultural

differences. The lecture will take place from 6 to 9 pm ET on Oct. 19 at the Ronald Reagan Building & International Trade Center (1300 Pennsylvania Ave NW Washington, DC). You may RSVP at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/14th-annual-aera-brown-lecture-in-education-research-tickets-35522375381?aff=email072717>. This event is free and open to the public. A buffet reception will follow.

8. Briefing on the Intersection of Substance Abuse, Injuries & Violence – Oct. 24

On Oct. 24, the Injury and Violence Prevention Network, a coalition of national organizations working to advance injury and violence prevention, is hosting a congressional briefing on the intersection of substance abuse, injuries, and violence. The briefing discussion will have a specific focus on the impact on rural communities. This briefing will take place from 10 to 11:30am in the Capitol Visitors Center, congressional meeting room north, CVC-268. To RSVP, please email paul.bonta@safestates.org. See the attached flyer for more info.

9. Cancer Research Symposium Hosted by Johns Hopkins School of Medicine

Please join Johns Hopkins School of Medicine for a symposium in 902 Hart Senate Office Building in Washington, D.C., on Wed., Nov. 1, from 8:30 a.m. to noon to hear from top scientists on how they recommend expanding and implementing the Blue Ribbon Panel's road map for cancer research. The speakers will discuss a report that will be published by the journal *The Lancet Oncology* and is co-edited by Elizabeth Jaffee, M.D., deputy director of the Johns Hopkins Kimmel Cancer Center, and Chi Van Dang, M.D., Ph.D., scientific director at Ludwig Cancer Research and professor at The Wistar Institute. Learn what you need to know about investing in research, prevention and treatment of cancer, the second leading cause of death in the U.S. RSVP for the symposium by emailing JHonthRoad@jhmi.edu. See the attached flyer for more info.

10. SfN Invites You to Its Neurobiology of Disease Workshop – Nov. 10

On Nov. 10, The Society for Neuroscience (SfN) will host a [2017 Neurobiology of Disease Workshop](#), "Gene Therapy to Address Unmet Needs in Neurology." This workshop will feature Florian Eichler, MD, Xandra O. Breakefield, PhD, and [others](#) to discuss the breadth of current and emerging gene therapy approaches to treat neurologic disorders such as Alzheimer's disease, ALS, or muscular dystrophy. This workshop embraces the breadth of "gene therapy" including viral vectors, oligonucleotides, and cell therapies used in promising preclinical studies and clinical trials for a variety of neurologic disorders long thought to be incurable. These new methods involve DNA engineering, gene replacement using virus vectors and the patient's own genetically modified cells, oligonucleotides that can "revive" beneficial gene functions or suppress toxic ones, and viruses and cells armed to tackle brain tumors. For questions, please email training@sfn.org.

11. Global Liver Institute Announces "Advanced Advocacy Academy" – Nov. 10-11

Even though half a billion people are affected with liver disease world-wide, awareness for liver diseases is low. Knowing that patients often have some of the most valuable perspectives on

health care, the [Global Liver Institute](http://globalliver.org) has designed a two-day workshop to train patients and family members to take the knowledge they have gained from their health care experiences and use it to have an impact through advocacy. With the help of expert patient advocates, policy-makers, physicians, and communicators, participants are offered the opportunity to gain skills from multiple learning tracks, including legislation, drug development, patient-centric value frameworks, health care delivery and media to cater to the different skill-sets and interests. Find out more at globalliver.org/advanced-advocacy-academy.

12. FasterCures Convenes “Partnering for Cures” in San Francisco – Nov. 14

Since 2009, [Partnering for Cures](http://www.partneringforcures.org/) (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](http://www.fastercures.org/), 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/>.

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.