Ad Hoc Group Weekly Round Up
November 1, 2021

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:

The Partnership for Public Service @publicservice – October 28

Congratulations to the #Sammies2021 COVID-19 Response winners: Gary H. Gibbons, M.D. & Eliseo J. Pérez-Stable, M.D. from @NIH! They implemented federal programs to increase participation in COVID-19 treatment and vaccine trials in underserved communities. Read more here.

Senate Appropriators to Discuss Topline Funding Levels for FY 2022

Chairs and ranking members of the House and Senate Appropriations Committees are expected to convene this week to begin negotiations on topline spending levels for FY 2022, reported CQ (subscription required). A bipartisan agreement between Congress and the White House will be necessary to complete the FY 2022 appropriations process, with the current continuing resolution (CR) set to expire on Dec. 3. Senate Appropriations Committee Ranking Member Richard Shelby (R-Ala.) told reporters that the meeting is a sign of progress, but that he expects additional stopgap measures will be needed after Dec. 3 before FY 2022 is finalized. He noted that the ongoing reconciliation process along with differences regarding defense spending and certain policy provisions will need to be addressed.

Office of Management and Budget Acting Director Shalanda Young also sent an Oct. 27 letter to appropriators urging them to complete their work on FY 2022 spending bills before the expiration of the current CR on Dec. 3.

Updated Build Back Better Includes Additional Funds for the NIH

Congressional Democrats unveiled updated text of the Build Back Better Act (H.R. 5376) on Oct. 28. The $1.75 trillion social spending package is a scaled-back version of the budget reconciliation legislation originally advanced by several House committees of jurisdiction in September. The updated bill includes $100 million in new funding for the NIH, with $75 million to expand research capacity at Minority Serving Institutions and to diversify the scientific workforce. The bill also includes $10 million for the NIH to support research related to developmental delays in children as well as $15 million for...
the NIH’s Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development to fund research on interventions to mitigate COVID-19 impacts on pregnant, lactating, and postpartum individuals. Unlike the committee-passed legislation, the revised bill does not include investments to establish the president’s proposed Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health (ARPA-H).

HELP Committee to Hear Testimony on COVID-19 Response
NIH’s National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) Director Anthony Fauci, MD, will testify before the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee on Nov. 4 at 10am EST. The hearing titled, “Next Steps: The Road Ahead for the COVID-19 Response” is expected to include testimony from Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response Dawn O’Connell, JD; U.S. Food and Drug Administration Acting Commissioner Janet Woodcock, MD; and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Director Rochelle Walensky, MD, MPH.

Open Mike: NIH Updates Anti-Sexual Harassment Website
The NIH recently launched an updated anti-sexual harassment website “to encompass the range of threats to safe and respectful workplaces at institutions receiving NIH funding,” said NIH Director of Extramural Research Mike Lauer, MD, in an Oct. 29 blog post. The updated website describes the actions NIH can take to address different forms of harassment, how to notify the agency, resources to evaluate workplace climate, as well as frequently asked questions. The updated site also includes access to information on the numbers and types of harassment cases NIH handles involving projects at NIH-supported institutions, and the resulting actions.

NIH Annual Report to the Nation Part 2: Patient Economic Burden of Cancer Care
The NIH’s National Cancer Institute (NCI) released part two of its annual report to the nation on Oct. 26, highlighting that in 2019, the national patient economic burden associated with cancer care was $21.09 billion. This total represents patient out-of-pocket costs of $16.22 billion and patient time costs of $4.87 billion. “In the modern era of cancer research, we have to think about treatment costs and how they impact our patients. As exciting and promising as cancer research is, we are keenly aware of the issue of financial toxicity for these patients,” said Norman E. “Ned” Sharpless, M.D., director of NCI. The annual report is a collaborative effort among the American Cancer Society; the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; the NCI; and the North American Association of Central Cancer Registries.

NEI Releases Strategic Plan, Revised Mission Statement
The NIH’s National Eye Institute (NEI) released its strategic plan, Vision for the Future (2021-2025) on Nov. 1, which identifies opportunities for the NEI to achieve its mission through leadership to drive innovation research, inspire and train a talented and diverse next generation and translate progress into practice. As part of the process, NEI has revised its mission statement to reflect its goal to eliminate vision loss and improve quality of life through leadership to drive innovation, foster collaboration in vision research, recruit, inspire, and train a diverse new generation of the vision workforce, and educate broadly about vision research’s impact on health and quality of life.

NIH Director Reflects on His Experience as NIH Director
In a series of recent interviews, NIH Director Francis Collins, MD, PhD, reflected on his 12 years of service leading the nation’s biomedical research agency. In Oct. 22 interviews with Diane Rehm and NPR’s Ira Flatow on Science Friday, Collins reviewed NIH’s successes challenges in the fight against COVID-19, the rise of partisanship and its impact on medical research, and the intersection between his faith and career. In an Oct. 25 interview with the Federal News Network, Collins discussed leading large cross-cutting initiatives like the All of Us Research Program and the agency’s relationship with industry.

2021 Research!America & Lasker A-Z Report Released
Research!America and the Lasker Foundation issued a report on Oct. 20 providing an overview of 60 diseases and conditions impacting people around the globe and showing the value of investing in research. The report emphasizes the myriad ways in which medical science has improved outcomes today and holds the tantalizing potential for further progress in the decades ahead.

United for Medical Research Releases Part 3 in Factsheet Series

Upcoming Events

**NIH Virtual Seminar on Program Funding and Grants Administration – Nov. 1-4**
The NIH is hosting a virtual regional seminar on program funding and grants administration from November 1-4. The event website includes a detailed agenda with keynote speakers and concurrent sessions. Registration is free and available on the event website. Additional background information is available on the Sept. 24 Open Mike blog post.

**NABR Webinar on the Harm-Benefit Analysis for Animal Research – Nov. 2**
Join the National Association for Biomedical Research on Tuesday, Nov. 2 at 12:30 p.m. EST when Jerrold Tannenbaum leads a webinar titled “Follow the Science! Why the Pursuit of Knowledge – and not ‘Harm-Benefit Analysis’ – is the Key to Scientifically and Ethically Sound Animal Research.” In recent years there has been much discussion in the research community about Institutional Animal Care and Use Committees (IACUC) adopting the Harm Benefit Analysis (HBA) in the review and evaluation of the proposed use of animals in biomedical research, which will be discussed in the webinar. Register here.

**NEW Webinar: Telehealth for Alcohol Use Disorder During the Pandemic and Beyond – Nov. 3**
This webinar is sponsored by the Friends of the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) in collaboration with the American Psychological Association and will highlight how telehealth and eHealth have been implemented in the treatment of
alcohol use disorder — both in the past and during the COVID-19 pandemic — and discuss the challenges that have emerged for patients, providers, and payers as these telehealth/eHealth interventions continue to reshape traditional behavioral health services. The webinar will take place on Nov. 10 from 1pm – 2:30pm EST. Please register here.

NIAAA, one of the 27 Institutes and Centers of the NIH, supports research examining the relationship between alcohol misuse and the pandemic, including how treatment strategies have been modified while meeting the needs of individuals who struggle with alcohol misuse.

NEW Coming Soon: ASHG ACGT Program – Nov. 4
The American Society of Human Genetics (ASHG) will open its applications for the new Advocacy Certificate for Human Genetics and Genomics Trainees (ACGT) program on November 4, 2021. ACGT is a competitive, year-long program aimed at providing trainee ASHG members pursuing a research or clinical career with an introduction to the world of science policy and human genetics and genomics advocacy. As part of the program, trainees will have the opportunity to participate in various key activities such as contributing to the development of advocacy materials, attending networking and mentoring workshops, and participating in a Hill Day.

The program is open to ASHG members who are currently completing an undergraduate or graduate degree, postdoctoral fellows, or early career researchers in a human genetics and genomics or related field. More information about the ACGT program can be found here.

Congressional Briefing: Speaking with Keratoconus Patients About Research and Treatments - Nov. 10
The Alliance for Eye and Vision Research (AEVR) is joining with the National Keratoconus Foundation (NKCF) to recognize World Keratoconus Day 2021. Keratoconus (KC) is an eye condition in which the normally round, dome-shaped cornea—the transparent front of the eye—becomes weak and irregular, resulting in vision distortion, double or blurry vision, and light sensitivity. Researchers believe that certain individuals have a genetic predisposition to develop it, and a 2021 study from Australia suggests prevalence of 1.2% of the population, meaning it affects the lives of more than 3 million Americans. Speakers Christopher Rapuano, MD (Wills Eye Hospital) and Christine Sindt, OD, FAAO (University of Iowa) will address how they speak with newly diagnosed KC patients about research and treatment options. The briefing will take place on Nov. 10 from 12-1pm EST. View the briefing flyer for additional information and RSVP to Dina Beaumont at dinabeau@aol.com.

NEW Congressional Briefing: Better Understanding Thyroid Eye Disease - Nov. 17
Alliance for Eye and Vision Research (AEVR) in conjunction with Research to Prevent Blindness Society for Women’s Health Research Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO) will host Better Understanding Thyroid Eye Disease: Physician, Patient, and Caregiver Perspectives, with a Discussion on Women’s Vision Health. Thyroid Eye Disease (TED) is a serious, debilitating, and vision-threatening rare
autoimmune disease where the immune system attacks muscles and other tissue behind and around the eyes. People living with TED frequently experience long-term functional, psychosocial, and economic burdens, including inability to work and perform activities of daily living that can result in depression and accelerated mortality. TED is an ongoing condition with two phases and if left untreated may get worse over time. The virtual briefing will take place on November 17th from 12pm – 1:15pm. Please RSVP to: 202-407-8325 or dinabeau@aol.com. Please access the event here.

NEW Virtual Briefing: Braving the Storm: How Climate Change Will Affect How and Where We Live – Dec. 6
The Population Association of America will be hosting a virtual briefing on climate change on December 6 from 12pm – 1pm. As climate change accelerates, extreme weather events and natural disasters (hurricanes, drought, forest fires, polar vortexes) have proliferated, and long-term effects—including rising sea levels and other coastal hazards—are becoming more apparent. But what about the impact on demographic change? Who is at risk? What trends have already surfaced due to climate change, and what might be coming just over the horizon? Shifting migration patterns and emerging risks for vulnerable subpopulations in local communities are among the myriad issues that demographers are examining in the context of climate change. Join a panel of experts as they share their most recent research and respond to your questions. Please register here for the briefing.

Help End the HIV Epidemic: Clinical Fellowship Opportunity – Dec. 13
The HIV Medicine Association and IDSA Foundation are accepting applications for the 2022–2023 training year. The fellowship program supports up to two physicians who are not trained in infectious diseases to pursue one year of HIV clinical training under the mentorship of an HIVMA member at clinical sites serving medically underserved populations.

The award includes a stipend set according to the PGY-4 salary level at the training institution, funds to cover the fringe benefits provided by the sponsoring organization and an additional $5,000 to support educational opportunities or offset administrative costs. Physicians whose communities are underrepresented in medicine or who are interested in working in the Southeastern United States are strongly encouraged to apply. Program and application requirements are on the HIVMA website, including recommended competencies for HIV clinical fellows. Email HIVMA staff with questions or for more information. Applications are now due by Dec. 13.

NIH COVID-19 Resources

NIH COVID-19 resource for applicants and grantees including guidance for various aspects of research and grant application processes, as well as FAQs and COVID-19 funding opportunities.

COVID-19 “Updates History” webpage that details relevant updates for applicants and grantees by date.
FAQ document on COVID-19 flexibilities related to policies and programs affecting the grants process.

Funding opportunities specific to COVID-19 lists active and expired funding opportunities across NIH related to SARS-CoV-2/COVID-19 research.

NIH COVID-19 Research Website provides a central location for trusted, up-to-date, accurate information about NIH research and our strategic role in COVID-19 research.

HHS COVID-19 awards tracking website including data on awards made by all HHS awarding agencies with supplemental appropriations.

Combat COVID website including information for those who have never had COVID-19, have been infected, have recovered, and for health care providers.

Job Postings

Legislative Assistant, AAMC
The Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) is seeking a Legislative Assistant that will advocate on behalf of AAMC priorities and strengthen strategic alliances in collaboration with the Senior Director and other AAMC government relations and policy staff. With direction from the Senior Director, Government Relations & Legislative Advocacy, this role will supervise, track, and analyze activities of Congress primarily related to Medicaid and safety-net hospital and physician policies and other clinically related advocacy initiatives affecting AAMC member teaching hospitals, physicians, and the patients they serve. Learn more about the Association of American Medical Colleges here. To learn more about the position and apply, please click here.

Assistant Vice President of Federal Research and Health Policy, CU
The University of Colorado seeks an Assistant Vice President of Federal Research and Health Policy. The Assistant VP of Federal Research and Health Policy will develop and lead strategy for federal advocacy for CU Anschutz Medical Campus, CU System, and University of Colorado Hospital (UCH) – determine federal priorities; pursue federal agency funding opportunities; maintain effective relationships with Colorado Congressional Delegation and staff, federal executive branch offices, and other health systems and higher education institutions. Along with specific institution focus, the Assistant VP will also serve as the lead on health policy, hospital, physical, and research issues; including the analysis and tracking of all related federal bills and advancement of budgetary, legislative, and policy priorities. For a full position description, please visit the CU Careers Page.

Academic Public Health Leadership Positions
The Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health (ASPPH) has posted three senior level job announcements: Chief External Relations And Advocacy Officer; Director, Advocacy and Federal Affairs; and Chief Academic Officer. The Chief External Relations and Advocacy Officer will lead the integration and advancement of the
ASPPH’s advocacy, strategic communications, and fundraising and development efforts. The Chief also will lead the ASPPH’s efforts to promote the use of research and science to advance public policy. The Director, Advocacy and Federal Affairs, will lead the ASPPH’s efforts to affect regulatory, legislative, and other public policy issues. The individual also is charged with keeping the leaders of ASPPH member schools and programs informed on the status of policy deliberations and legislative and regulatory actions. The Chief Academic Officer will lead programs, initiatives, and activities that support education, accreditation, practice, professional development, workforce development, and data. All three positions are based in ASPPH’s Washington, DC office. Applications will be accepted through October 15, 2021.

Science Policy Analyst, American Physiological Society
The American Physiological Society (APS) is seeking a Science Policy Analyst that will report to the Director of Science Policy and Government Relations to help fulfill APS’s advocacy role by tracking legislative and regulatory issues related to federal funding for biomedical research, the use of animals in biomedical research, biomedical research workforce, and other science policy issues, helping develop and implement advocacy strategies in support of Society positions on research funding, animal research, and other science policy issues, supporting the American Physiological Society’s Science Policy (SP) and Animal Care and Experimentation (ACE) Committees, representing APS in meetings with external scientific and advocacy organizations and coalitions, and represent the department in internal APS activities and projects, writing about science policy for the Society’s website, news magazine and social media and contribute to other communications efforts. To learn more about APS, please visit their website.
Please e-mail your cover letter and resume to apply for the position.

The Director, Government Affairs and Policy, The ALS Association
The Director, Government Affairs reports to the Vice President, Public Policy and works as part of a team with the Associate Director of Grassroots Advocacy and the Public Policy Manager. The Director, Government Affairs designs and directs all aspects of government affairs including identifying legislative and regulatory opportunities, securing appropriations, and advancing legislation and policies through nonpartisan advocacy with members of Congress, congressional committees, and relevant federal agencies. The Director, Government Affairs is also responsible for collaborating with the Associate Director of Grassroots Advocacy to mobilize Association chapters and volunteers to achieve results and represents the association in national coalitions focused on the needs of people living with ALS. Bachelor’s degree with 4-8 years of work experience in healthcare government affairs and advocacy or the equivalent combination of education and work experience. Click here to apply.

IADR/AADR Seek Assistant Director of Government Affairs
The International and American Associations for Dental Research are seeking an Assistant Director of Government Affairs to recommend and implement the Associations’ policy priorities related to dental, oral and craniofacial research; the federal research enterprise, including the scientific workforce; scholarly publishing; international collaboration and more. Additional information and application instructions can be found here.
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 or Tannaz Rasouli at trasouli@aamc.org.