

Ad Hoc Group Weekly Round Up – Dec. 4, 2017

Editor's Note: The Ad Hoc Group [website](#) will be undergoing a scheduled upgrade and will be unavailable beginning 8 p.m. ET on Friday, Dec. 8, through 8 p.m. ET on Sunday, Dec. 10, 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:

Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research (@FundNIH)

. [@HouseAppropsGOP](#) introduces CR thru Dec. 22 - would allow add'l time for budget deal before current CR expires Fri. <http://bit.ly/2BDPN10>

1. House Appropriations Chair Introduces CR to Fund Government through Dec. 22

On Dec. 2, House Appropriations Chair Rodney Frelinghuysen (R-N.J.) [introduced](#) a continuing resolution (CR) to fund the government through Dec. 22. The CR modifies the expiration date of the previous CR (P.L. 115-56) from Dec. 8 to Dec. 22, so all provisions in the previous CR, including the prohibition on modifying NIH support for facilities and administrative expenses (F&A), would carry forward if the CR is enacted. Chairman Frelinghuysen [noted](#), "This CR will allow for additional time for a deal is reached on top-line spending levels for this fiscal year. Once this agreement is made, my Committee will rapidly go to work with the Senate to complete the final legislation." It is not clear, however, whether Democrats will support the approach. Though she did not indicate how she plans to vote on the bill, in her own statement on the CR, House Appropriations Ranking Member Nita Lowey (D-N.Y.) reportedly criticized the approach, noting, "We are now two months late enacting full-year Appropriations and counting, with another Continuing Resolution apparently planned for later this month. I am eager to know what Republican leadership believes they can accomplish in the next two weeks that they haven't been able to accomplish in the last two months." The House Committee on Rules is [scheduled](#) to discuss the CR on at 2pm on Dec. 5 in H-313, the Capitol.

2. NIH Director Scheduled to Testify at Two Senate Hearings This Week

On Dec. 5, the Senate Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee [will hold](#) a hearing to examine prevention, treatment, and recovery activities related to the opioid crisis. Among other witnesses, NIH Director Francis Collins, MD, PhD, is scheduled to testify. The hearing will take place at 10am in 124 Dirksen Senate Office Building. Dr. Collins is also expected to testify before the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee for a [hearing](#) entitled, "Implementation of the 21st Century Cures Act: Progress and the Path Forward for Medical Innovation." This hearing will take place at 10am on Dec. 7 in 430 Dirksen Senate Office Building.

3. NIH Director Updates House Committee on 21st Century Cures Act

On Nov. 21, the House Energy & Commerce Committee held a Health subcommittee [hearing](#) entitled, “Implementing the 21st Century Cures Act: An Update from FDA and NIH.” During his [testimony](#), Dr. Collins focused most of his time on initiatives under the NIH Innovation Fund, and members of the subcommittee inquired how his agency is supporting younger researchers. Dr. Collins highlighted the Next Generation Researchers Initiative, which is focused on “strengthening the biomedical workforce with a focus on early career investigators or investigators who are at an early stage in their career.” Food and Drug Administration Commissioner Scott Gottlieb, MD, also testified.

4. House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee Discusses Global Alzheimer’s Impact

On Nov. 29, the House Foreign Affairs Committee’s Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations [held](#) a hearing entitled, “A Global Update on Alzheimer’s Disease.” Subcommittee Chair Christopher Smith (R-N.J.) said the purpose of the hearing was to “examine the existing and potential options for prevention and treatment of this often devastating disease.” Among the testifying witnesses were Marie Bernard, MD, deputy director at the National Institute on Aging at the NIH, and Roger Glass, MD, PhD, director of the Fogarty International Center at NIH. [Testimony](#) from Drs. Bernard and Glass discussed efforts at the NIH to advance risk identification, diagnosis, and treatment of Alzheimer’s disease.

5. NIH’s Advisory Committee to the Director Scheduled to Meet Dec. 14-15

Through a Federal Register [notice](#), the NIH announced that the Advisory Committee to the Director (ACD) will meet on Dec. 14 from 9am to 5:30pm and Dec. 15 from 9am to 1pm to discuss the NIH Director's report, ACD working group reports, and other business of the committee. The meeting will be held at National Institutes of Health, Building 31, 6th Floor Conference Room 6C, 31 Center Drive, Bethesda, MD. The contact person for the meeting is Gretchen Wood, who can be reached by email at Woodgs@od.nih.gov.

6. Fox News Op-Ed: Animal lovers should support animal research, not condemn it. Here’s why

On Dec. 2, FoxNews.com [published](#) an op-ed by Matthew Bailey, president of the Foundation for Biomedical Research (FBR), in which he makes the case for animal research. Bailey writes, “Animal research gives sick pets a second chance – and lays the groundwork for treatments that could save others down the line.” He also highlights how animal research “is also responsible for some of the greatest breakthroughs in modern medical history, including the eradication of smallpox, innovative treatments for malaria, and the management of diabetes.”

7. UK Prime Minister’s Office Press Release: Record boost to R&D

On Nov. 20, the Government of the United Kingdom [published](#) a press release highlighting a boost in support for research and development (R&D), saying “the UK will see its biggest ever increase.” The release says the investment is “part of the Industrial Strategy’s aim to improve productivity and create better and higher-paying jobs across the UK.” Included in the strategy is

a plan to “work with industry to boost spending on R&D to 2.4 per cent of GDP by 2027, which could increase public and private R&D investment by as much as £80 billion over the next 10 years.” The UK Business Secretary says that the UK is a “world leader in science and innovation” and that they want to “attract, and create, the best and brightest talents, from Nobel Prize winners to ambitious graduate students, and this game-changing investment will ensure we are the home of the industries of the future and high-quality, good jobs.”

8. ARVO Briefing on Healthcare Savings Through Research – Dec. 7

On Dec. 7, the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology will host a briefing that will tie the value of research to the hot topic of health care spending. Speakers will quantify how the use of an eye-imaging technology invented with NIH and National Science Foundation funding generated billions of dollars in Medicare savings. Attendees can get their eyes screened starting at 11:30 am in 2045 Rayburn House Office Building, with the lunch briefing beginning at noon. View the attached flyer for more information. ARVO is hosting the event in conjunction with the Alliance for Eye and Vision Research (AEVR). To RSVP, call Dina Beaumont 202-407-8325 or email dinabeau@aol.com.

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.