

United for Medical Research



June 9, 2014

UMR MEMBERS

American Association
for Cancer Research

American Cancer Society
Cancer Action Network

American Diabetes Association

American Heart Association

Association of American
Universities

Association of Public and
Land-grant Universities

BD

Biotechnology Industry
Organization

Boston University

Corning

FasterCures

Harvard University

Johns Hopkins University

Life Technologies

Massachusetts Institute of
Technology

Melanoma Research Alliance

Northwestern University

Pancreatic Cancer Action
Network

Partners HealthCare

PhRMA

Research!America

Stanford University

The Endocrine Society

Thermo Fisher Scientific

University of Pennsylvania

University of Southern
California

Vanderbilt University

Washington University
in St. Louis

Chairman Fred Upton
House Energy and Commerce Committee
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Representative Diana DeGette
House Energy and Commerce
Committee
2368 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Upton and Representative DeGette:

United for Medical Research (UMR) represents leading research institutions, patient and health advocates and private industry, joined together to seek steady increases in federal funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in order to advance the development of new and better treatments. We appreciate the work the Committee is doing through the 21st Century Cures Initiative and would like to express our strong support for continuing our nation's commitment to biomedical research, so that we may remain the world leader in the life sciences.

NIH is an economic driver and jobs creator, an irreplaceable source of federal investments in basic research, and most importantly, the foundation for extraordinary improvements in our health, longevity, and quality of life. Further, NIH funding is often the catalyst for the private investment that ultimately leads to new treatments for patients.

Below please find UMR's response to the white paper entitled "21st Century Cures: A Call to Action".

NIH Research is Critical to Private Sector Innovation

A steady stream of medical advances, from new drugs and devices to improved diagnostics and cutting edge technologies, are the byproduct of federally funded research discoveries. The biomedical research pipeline is a partnership between the 325,000 scientists funded by NIH, performing research at 3,000 institutions in all fifty states and the private sector. Private industry provides the products to support research discovery and brings research breakthroughs to fruition and into the marketplace. It also develops the discoveries that are the result of NIH-funded research, turning them into diagnostic tools and treatments that help avoid needless suffering and save countless lives.

As Senator Richard Durbin recently asserted, "In the last two centuries, U.S. government support for scientific research has helped split the atom, defeat polio, conquer space, create the internet, map the human genome, and much

United for Medical Research



more. No nation has ever made such a significant investment in science, and no nation's scientists have ever done more to improve the quality of life on Earth."

NIH supports the highest-quality science and trains the next generation of medical researchers, ensuring that the pipeline of knowledge and talent does not run dry. The private sector's ability to maintain the rate of medical advancements depends in large part on a sustained commitment to NIH. One of the biggest obstacles to scientific progress has been a decade of budgets that have failed to keep pace with biomedical inflation and a \$1.6 billion cut due to sequestration. NIH's loss of purchasing power over the past decade is alarming. NIH Director Dr. Francis Collins recently underscored this point when he said, "NIH is the largest supporter of biomedical research in the world, but we are losing our edge. Since 2003, we've seen a steady decline in support, down to about 25 percent below where we were 10 years ago in terms of our power to fund research."

NIH as an Economic Engine

"Growing and sustaining a viable, long-term innovation eco-system is the smart choice and the only choice that makes sense for patients and for our national economy," noted John Castellani, President and CEO of PhRMA. NIH-supported research triggers private investment and significantly contributes to job growth and the overall strength of the U.S. in the global health care market.

As Congressman Jack Kingston (R-GA), Chair of the Labor/Health and Human Services/Education and Related Agencies testified at a recent hearing, "NIH's support for extramural basic research provides the 'seed corn' for the private sector to create new, innovative preventable digital medicine."

A 2012 report by UMR entitled "*NIH's Role in Sustaining The U.S. Economy*" shows that NIH has a vital role in fueling economic growth in the health and life sciences industry. However, it also showed that the lack of sustained investment in the agency is beginning to have an impact. The decrease in NIH funding between 2010 and 2011, which was in part attributable to the end of supplementary funding by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, forecasted a decrease of approximately 55,000 jobs nationwide. This coupled with the \$1.6 billion cut in funding due to sequestration has had real and lasting effect on jobs and research.

As the data clearly show, there is an urgent need to re-prioritize our support for biomedical research and this critical job sector by providing NIH with increased funding to counteract the effects of a budget that for the last decade has not kept pace with inflation and blunt the catastrophic impact of sequestration.

NIH Provides Hopes to Millions

United for Medical Research



Although its importance to the nation's economy is remarkable, we must not forget NIH's primary mission: to improve the health of the nation. NIH has been tremendously successful in improving human health and its accomplishments are numerous and well documented: a nearly 70-percent reduction in the death rate for coronary heart disease and stroke; advances in HIV/AIDS treatment that put an AIDS-free generation within reach; nearly one million lives saved due to decreases in cancer death rates over the past decade; and steady increases in life expectancy.

Moreover, as our understanding of the human genome grows at an exponential rate, we have entered an era of personalized medicine where intervention on an individualized level is beginning to generate story after story of children and adults whose lives have been saved through cutting-edge research advances. These human stories of triumph over disease and scientific opportunity serve to provide hope to millions of patients whose diseases and conditions are still waiting for the next generation of treatment or cure.

Looming Threats: Global Competition and Sequestration

"Investing in research has huge paybacks, paybacks in improving the human condition and paybacks in reducing health costs as you get new tools," noted Bill Gates, Microsoft founder and Co-Chair of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, when he visited NIH last year. Indeed, Congress' wisdom in investing federal dollars in NIH has yielded phenomenal dividends and made the U.S. the undisputed world leader in life science innovation.

However, ever-shrinking budgets have made it difficult to maintain that leadership. Other nations are following in our footsteps to fuel their own biomedical research enterprises, even as we take a step back. China, India, the European Union, and Russia have all declared their intentions to increase their research investment, despite the fiscal challenges presented by the global economy.

"From 2007 to 2012, countries average annual investment in biomedical R&D increased 33 percent in China, 12 percent in South Korea, 10 percent in Singapore and it fell by two percent in the United States," Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro, Ranking Member of the Labor/Health and Human Services/Education and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee recently said. Losing our competitive edge in biomedical research is a clear and present danger to the crucial economic contributions of our life sciences innovation ecosystem.

Research Only Supported by NIH

United for Medical Research



The history of NIH research in the molecular discoveries that are the basis for countless vaccines, diagnostics, and treatments is well-established. What is somewhat less appreciated is the equally important and broader scientific portfolio that has a proven track record of saving and improving lives of the American public.

Prevention is a central strategy for every chronic disease in the in the United States. Research supported by the NIH has led to the development of what are now well-established, evidence-based preventive options for heart disease, diabetes, certain types of cancer, and many other diseases. Diseases that lack prevention strategies not only require better treatments, they need research that will produce a way of preventing them, as well. Such progress would not only save countless lives, it would ease the burden on our health care system and result in significant economic savings as well.

When people do get sick, it is important not to just treat the disease but to treat the patient as well. NIH supports research that improves how patients are treated when receiving a curative treatment. This research strives to reduce the toxicity and side effects of treatments, better manage symptoms, and ensure the needs of patients are being met. One example of how this is done is through clinical trials that study existing therapies to determine whether a lower dosage or shorter treatment regimen would result in the same curative outcome as a higher dose or longer regimen, but with fewer significant or long-term side-effects. For people living longer with heart disease, cancer, and other chronic conditions, the impact on a person's quality of life and productivity cannot be overstated.

Research like this does not happen without NIH support and it is an integral part of NIH's research portfolio. It also has a significant impact and benefit on the U.S. economy and the well-being of our fellow citizens.

NIH Should Remain a U.S. Priority

John Lechleiter, the CEO and chairman Eli Lilly & Co., once stated, "There's no better investment that we can make than in biomedical research and in our health. This is not something that we're trying to steal away from someone else... America leads the world."

We could not agree more. Increased investments in biosciences through the only federal agency specifically designed for this purpose —NIH — makes more sense than ever.

For our economy, for our position as a world leader, for the health of our citizens, UMR respectfully requests that as you move forward with the 21st Century Cures

United for Medical Research



Initiative and include a strategy for providing the NIH with a path toward stable, sustainable and predictable growth.

Sincerely,

Members of United for Medical Research