

For Immediate Release

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Medical Researchers Come Together to Remind Congress: Research Means Hope

Washington, D.C., April 22—A coalition of the nation's medical schools, teaching hospitals, universities, patient groups, research companies and organizations today launched a new effort to urge Congress to enact significant, annual increases in funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the nation's primary sponsor of medical research.

The new campaign, **ResearchMeansHope.org**, will use print, radio and online advertising, as well as electronic and social media to raise public awareness of the critical need for sustained, real growth in federal funding for medical research. A new Web site, ResearchMeansHope.org, also provides information about the importance of NIH-supported research and makes it easy for the public to send a message to Congress.

The campaign is sponsored by the Association of American Medical Colleges, the Association of American Universities, the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities, the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology, the Johns Hopkins University, and more than 40 other supporting organizations. The list of organizations may be viewed at <http://www.researchmeanshope.org/about.html>.

"Despite considerable progress in new treatments and therapies, too many people continue to struggle daily with diseases that have no cure, like diabetes, mental illness, and Alzheimer's disease," said Edward D. Miller, M.D., dean and CEO of Johns Hopkins Medicine. "Medical research is the beginning of hope for millions of Americans, and one of the best investments we can make in our future."

NIH-funded research has pioneered many of the advances that today enable Americans to live longer and healthier lives. Over the past 30 years, there has been a 50 percent decline in deaths from heart disease and a 60 percent decrease in deaths from stroke. And, while once four out of five children with leukemia died, today four out of five survive.

More recently, NIH-funded advances have led to a vaccine to prevent cervical cancer; new, targeted therapies for many types of cancer; the identification of genetic markers for mental illness; improved treatments for asthma; and the near-elimination of mother-to-child HIV transmission.

"Unfortunately, 'boom and bust' cycles of support in recent years have resulted in delayed hope for patients and their families and lost opportunities for science," said Darrell G. Kirch, M.D., president and CEO of the Association of American Medical Colleges. "While the recent infusion of federal funds for NIH in the economic recovery package is welcome news, the NIH budget still declined 11 percent after inflation between 2003 and 2009. It is essential that we renew our national commitment to sustained, real growth in NIH funding over the long term."

ResearchMeansHope.org

More information about the ResearchMeansHope.org campaign—and the many benefits of NIH-supported research—can be found online at www.ResearchMeansHope.org. To become a friend of the campaign on Facebook, visit <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Research-Means-Hope/83176136398>. To follow the effort on Twitter, go to <http://twitter.com/researchhope>.

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ResearchMeansHope.org founding members comment on the critical need for sustained, real growth in medical research funding:

“The lack of sustainable NIH funding threatens to affect an entire generation of young researchers, as the difficulty in obtaining grants drives our best and brightest scientists to seek opportunities outside of the lab. We can’t afford that loss of talent in our search for medical breakthroughs.”

Richard Marchase, Ph.D., president of the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology and professor of cell biology and vice president for research at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

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“NIH-funded research also keeps our nation at the forefront of medical insight and discovery, producing a steady stream of innovations and talented researchers that flow into U.S. industries and make them more competitive.”

Robert Berdahl, Ph.D., president of the Association of American Universities.

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“ResearchMeansHope.org will help the public communicate an important message to Congress: It’s time to invest in the future by committing to sustained, real growth in the NIH budget.”

Peter McPherson, president of the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities.

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