

FY 2007 Labor-HHS-Ed Appropriations Report APA Requested Language

Department of Health and Human Services

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH

Office of the Director

Research Training-- page 176

The Committee commends the NIH Director for his efforts to improve training for young investigators through the new Pathway to Independence program. We encourage the NIH to maintain its commitment to training future biomedical and behavioral scientists, including women and minority researchers, who are instrumental in understanding health disparities. Given the importance of reducing health disparities in diseases such as cancer, diabetes, heart disease, as well as mental disorders, it is crucial that NIH increase the coordination of data collection and the development of objectives and long-term outcome measures across institutes and centers and review whether current reductions in training are having disproportionate impacts on minority investigators.

Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research

Basic behavioral research—page 166

OBSSR is congratulated on its tenth anniversary at NIH. The committee encourages OBSSR to continue working to build alliances among institutes that support and nurture basic behavioral and social sciences research. In particular, the Committee encourages OBSSR to partner with NIGMS and other funders of basic research to enhance support for work on methods, animal models, and the interplay of biological factors, behavioral and social influences underlying phenomena such as stress that influence multiple health conditions.

National Institute on Child Health and Human Development

Behavioral Science—page 134

The Committee emphasizes its strong support for the broad portfolio of behavioral research at NICHD and supports its efforts to determine the biological, behavioral, and social factors that affect cognitive, social, and personality development of children in a variety of settings. The Committee encourages the institute to maintain its support for research and training in behavioral science as it engages in its priority setting process.

Childhood Obesity—page 134,135

The Committee is pleased that NICHD is funding behavioral intervention research focused on preventing childhood obesity. The Committee encourages additional clinical trials that focus on the effectiveness of behavioral interventions in settings beyond primary care, including the home, school, community and other environments that influence physical activity and health behaviors. The Committee recognizes the critical importance of prevention efforts in this area and supports continued initiatives to promote healthy behaviors in children and adolescents, particularly for ethnic minority populations.

Family Formation— page 135,136

The Committee is pleased that NICHD is working with other Institutes and agencies to assess the state of the science and research needs related to children exposed to domestic and community

violence, war, and terrorism. The Committee encourages NICHD to fund research on effective ways to promote and sustain healthy family formations, particularly for low-income families and families of color. The Institute is encouraged to include research related to family, community and cultural factors that serve as risk or protective factors and promote resilience from exposure to violence in the home, communities, and schools.

Learning and School Readiness—page 136

The Committee continues to support NICHD on its commitment to research in reading, learning disabilities and math and science cognition. The Committee is encouraged that NICHD has made progress on developing comprehensive, culturally neutral and developmentally appropriate assessments and instruments to measure cognitive, social and emotional skills for pre-school aged children that are necessary for school readiness.

National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health—page 137

The Committee is pleased that the NICHD funded another round of the Add Health Study, which has provided a rich resource of the effects of home, family, and school environment on behaviors that promote health or could contribute to adverse health outcomes. By collecting data on biological, behavioral and social factors, researchers are discovering at which points during development significant increases in some risk behaviors, such as smoking, alcohol use and physical activity, are most likely to occur. As these risk behaviors offer early predictors of future chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease and diabetes, the study provides valuable information to inform public health prevention efforts. Given the important findings of this nationally representative study, the Committee encourages NICHD to ensure that the next wave is provided adequate funding.

National Institute of Mental Health

**Adolescent Depression and Suicide—page 153*

Depressive disorders, one of the major risk factors for suicide, continue to be very common in adolescence. The Committee is pleased to note that NIMH, in partnership with NIDA and NIAA, is supporting three research centers whose primary focus is on new trials to reduce adolescent suicidality. Suicide now accounts for 13 percent of all adolescent deaths and ranks third as a cause of death among teenagers. The Committee therefore strongly encourages NIMH to continue this investment in finding ways to better identify the risk factors in children and adolescents, and examining the outcomes of actions taken to assist those found to be at risk.

Basic Behavioral Science—page 153

The Committee urges the Institute to maintain its support for research on the promotion of mental health and the study of psychological, social, and legal factors that influence behavior. In particular, the Institute is encouraged to continue its commitment to basic behavioral research that examines the basic psychological functions that promote mental health or become disturbed in mental disorders.

Mental Health and Older Adults—page 155

The Committee is pleased that NIMH recognizes the importance and interrelatedness of cognitive, emotional health and mental health function in older adults and is collaborating with other institutes on efforts such as the Cognitive and Emotion Health Project. Given the increasing older adult population, it is critical that we continue to explore scientific opportunities to maintain cognitive functioning and mental health to prevent mental disorders like depression in older adults. NIMH is encouraged to continue its pivotal role as the primary institute for mental health and aging research by expanding its research on older adults to include large scale, multi-site trials of behaviorally-based treatments of depression, anxiety, and for managing behaviors associated with cognitive impairments as well as increasing opportunities for training future behavioral scientists focused on older adults.

NIMH Minority Training—page 155

The Committee is disappointed to learn that NIMH intends to reduce its commitment to training minority scientists through the Minority Fellowship Program and the Career Opportunities in Research Program. Both programs have demonstrated success in training biomedical and behavioral scientists who are addressing critical ethnic minority mental health issues. The Minority Fellowship Program in particular has been an important national program that has provided access to training to all, without regional or university-specific restrictions. Reducing these programs will have a disproportionate impact on minority mental health training at the precise time that we are focused on reducing health disparities for vulnerable and underserved populations.

Psychological Impacts of Trauma—page 155, 156

The Committee is pleased that NIMH is working with the Department of Veterans Affairs to ensure that psychosocial and pharmacological interventions are available to returning soldiers, veterans and their families. The Committee supports NIMH research related to the psychological impact of both acute and chronic exposure to threats of violence, including terrorism, war, natural disasters, and domestic and community violence. Within the area of trauma, particular emphasis should also be placed on vulnerable populations, such as trauma survivors, children and older adults. The Committee encourages NIMH to expand its research portfolio to include research related to psychosocial factors that promote detection or prediction, prevention, and post-exposure recovery and resilience.

Translating Behavioral Research—page 156

The Committee supports NIMH's efforts to advance the application of behavioral research and interventions in clinical settings to address the public health burden of mental disorders. The Committee strongly supports additional clinical trials that examine the effectiveness of behavioral interventions in community-based settings and utilizing adaptive treatment designs. Behavioral interventions are especially needed for children and adolescents with mental disorders, including post-traumatic stress disorder, eating disorders, attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder, and the most common forms of depression. Translational research in the behavioral sciences is especially needed to address how basic behavioral processes, such as cognition, emotion, motivation, development and social interaction, inform the diagnosis, treatment and delivery of services for mental disorders.

National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases

Behavioral research on pandemic flu—page 131

The Committee encourages NIAID to work with OBSSR to identify and fund behavioral research on infectious diseases. In particular, behavioral research in areas such as risk perception, adherence to vaccination recommendations, and public health preparedness, could enhance scientific research on preparation and response to pandemic influenza outbreaks.

National Cancer Institute

Dissemination research—page 108

The Committee commends the NCI for its leadership in an initiative to help evidence-based behavioral interventions reach the public more quickly. The Committee is supportive of NCI's efforts to inspire research that will overcome barriers to the adoption of evidence-based interventions that previous research has shown to be effective, but where adoption to date has been limited or significantly delayed.

National Institute on Diabetes, Digestive and Kidney Diseases

Behavioral research on Diabetes—page 118

The Committee commends the Institute for its continuing commitment to behavioral research on adherence to diet and exercise regimens to prevent or slow the progression of Type II diabetes. The Committee is concerned, however, that the strategic plan for research to combat Type I diabetes includes almost no behavioral research. NIDDK is encouraged to examine the impact of diet and exercise interventions on the health and glucose control of Type I diabetics.

National Institute on Aging

Behavioral and Social Research on Work and Retirement—page 143

The Committee encourages NIA to maintain its commitment to research on patterns and cycles of work in aging populations. Research on how jobs may be ‘retrofitted’ for an aging workforce, or how workplaces can better accommodate aging workers, is encouraged. Research on how older workers plan for and experience retirement is also timely and encouraged.

Healthy Brain Initiative—page 144

NIA is commended for its cooperative efforts in producing a searchable database of studies and planning joint efforts to solicit research on enhancing healthy cognitive and emotional function. This initiative is a model of how institutes can work together on complex issues involving multiple disciplines and methodologies. Given the importance of maintaining and enhancing brain health as the population ages, NIA is encouraged to make this initiative a priority.

National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism

Epigenetic (Environmental) Effects Underlying Alcoholism – page 149

The Committee understands that alcoholism is a complex behavioral disorder and that the genetic composition of an individual contributes to over half of the risk for developing this behavior, while the individual’s environmental interactions and influences also contribute significantly to this risk. Research supported by NIAAA has identified several candidate genes that increase an individual’s risk for developing an alcohol use disorder once the person chooses to drink alcohol. The Committee encourages NIAAA to continue to fund research to determine the role of the environment and environmental factors in producing lasting and potentially life-altering changes in gene expression and gene function that contributes to the development of alcohol abuse and addiction with the ultimate goal of developing new medication for the treatment of alcohol use disorders.

Clinician’s Guide – page 148,149

The Committee understands that NIAAA has recently revised its publication “Helping Patients Who Drink Too Much: A Clinician’s Guide.” The Committee applauds that the guide has been disseminated to thousands of primary care and mental health practitioners and organizations through an extensive program of direct mail and email announcements. The Committee encourages NIAAA to further develop Guide materials, including information for clinicians about how to best use the Guide, and short pamphlets that are targeted toward special subpopulations, and to work with professional organizations, SAMHSA, and other international organizations to further disseminate this important resource.

Underage Drinking – page 149

The Committee commends NIAAA for its team approach in developing and guiding its research programs to understand the many factors that contribute to the onset of drinking and abuse of alcohol by youth. The Committee is also aware that NIAAA has been partnering with the Surgeon General in the preparation of a report: “A Call to Action on Underage Drinking,” that will provide guidance to the public towards reducing underage drinking. The Committee commends NIAAA for its efforts in providing the scientific foundation for this report through the research supported by its Underage Drinking Initiative and for continuing to work with the Office of the Surgeon General and other Federal agencies on this effort.

Understanding Natural Recovery from Alcohol Dependence— page 149

Recent research has demonstrated that many individuals transition out of alcohol dependence without professional treatment. The Committee encourages NIAAA to investigate the mechanisms through which individuals alter their drinking behavior without professional treatment in order to design more effective treatments for alcohol use disorders.

National Institute on Drug Abuse

Adolescent Brain Development – page 150

The Committee notes neuroimaging research by NIDA and others showing that the human brain does not fully develop until about age 25. This adds to the rationale for referring to addiction as a “developmental disease.” The Committee encourages NIDA to continue its emphasis on adolescent brain development to better understand how developmental processes and outcomes are affected by drug exposure, the environment and genetics.

Drug Treatment in Criminal Justice Settings-- page 150

The Committee is very concerned about the well-known connections between drug use and crime. Research continues to demonstrate that providing treatment to individuals involved in the criminal justice system significantly decreases future drug use and criminal behavior, while improving social functioning. The Committee strongly supports NIDA’s efforts in this area, particularly the Criminal Justice Drug Abuse Treatment Studies (CJ-DATS).

Reducing Prescription Drug Abuse-- page 151,152

The Committee notes the continued increases in the numbers of people, especially young people, who use prescription drugs for non-medical purposes. Particular concern revolves around the inappropriate use of opioid analgesics – very powerful pain medications. The Committee commends NIDA for its research focus in this area, and for the new Prescription Opioid Use and Abuse in the Treatment of Pain initiative. Research targeting a reduction in prescription drug abuse, particularly among our Nation’s youth, should continue to be a priority for NIDA.

Social Neuroscience-- page 152

Research-based knowledge about the dynamic interactions of genes with environment confirm addiction as a complex and chronic disease of the brain with many contributors to its expression in individuals. The Committee applauds NIDA’s involvement in the recently released “social neuroscience” request for applications, and encourages the Institute to continue its focus on the interplay between genes, environment, and social factors and their relevance to drug abuse and addiction.

Translational Research: Ensuring Research is Adaptable and Useable—page 152

The Committee commends NIDA for its broad and varied information dissemination programs. The Committee also understands that the Institute is focused on stimulating and supporting innovative research to determine the components necessary for adopting, adapting, delivering, and maintaining effective research-supported policies, programs, and practices. As evidence-based strategies are developed, the Committee urges NIDA to support research to determine how these practices can be best implemented at the community level.

National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences

Genes and social environment—page 141

The committee commends the NIEHS for its partnership with the NHGRI in the Genes and Environment Initiative [GEI] which supports the studies in genetic analysis and environmental technology development to understand the causes of common diseases such as Parkinson’s, asthma, stroke, cancer, and heart disease. NIEHS’s role in developing new technology to monitor personal environmental exposures, dietary intake, and physical activity will greatly enhance our ability to understand how they interact with genetic variations and result in human

disease. The NIEHS is encouraged to take a closer look at environmental interactions with genes, and to involve expert behavioral and social scientists in the initiative to enhance the success and applicability of this important research.

Behavioral research in strategic plan—page 141

NIEHS is requested to report to the Committee during the fiscal year 2008 hearings on plans to extend its research on obesity and the built environment, and other areas in which behavioral research is to be involved in its research portfolio in the coming years. Individual and group behavior with regard to diet, exercise, work, recreation, family and neighborhood interaction, are critically important areas to investigate, to build knowledge about how people's environments shape their health.

National Institute for Neurological Disorders and Stroke

Healthy brain initiative—page 127

NINDS is commended for its cooperative efforts in producing a searchable database of studies and planning joint efforts to solicit research on enhancing healthy cognitive and emotional function. This initiative is a model of how institutes can work together on complex issues involving multiple disciplines and methodologies. Given the importance of maintaining and enhancing brain health at all stages of life, NINDS is encouraged to make this initiative a priority.

National Institute of General Medical Sciences

**Training programs- page 134*

The Committee continues to be pleased with the quality of NIGMS's training programs, particularly those that have a special focus on increasing the number of minority scientists such as the Minority Access to Research Careers (MARC) and Minority Biomedical Research Support programs. The Committee encourages NIGMS to continue to support these important initiatives, and is particularly pleased that NIGMS has supported biomedical career opportunities for high school and undergraduate college students in conjunction with historically black health professions schools. The Committee urges continued long-term support of this program.

National Institute of Nursing Research

**Behavioral Research- page 147*

The Committee realizes the importance of behavioral research in preventing and treating disease. While understanding the biological basis of disease is essential, it is understood that behavioral factors have a critical influence on the onset, course, and duration of disease and in the successful management of many disease conditions. The Committee encourages NINR to devote significant efforts to behavioral research, including research that examines the interactions of biological and behavioral factors and their effect on treatment and prevention.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ADMINISTRATION (SAMHSA)

Center for Mental Health Services

Emergency Mental Health and Traumatic Stress Services Branch-- page 183

The Committee recognizes the significant impact that natural and human-made disasters can have on mental and behavioral health. In particular, such events can lead to negative mental and behavioral health consequences for vulnerable populations, including older adults, children, individuals with disabilities, and ethnic minorities. The Committee acknowledges the role of the

Emergency Mental Health and Traumatic Stress Services Branch in supporting the emotional recovery of those impacted by trauma and disasters. The Committee encourages this branch, in collaboration with FEMA, to increase attention to the mental and behavioral health needs of vulnerable populations during and in the aftermath of a disaster.

**Page 183:* The Committee remains concerned about the need to improve the representation of minorities among behavioral health professionals providing services in the public sector. For this reason, the Committee is providing funding for the Minority Fellowship Program [MFP] at last year's level so that SAMHSA can continue this program, which has been successful in addressing this issue. The Committee does urge SAMHSA, however, to consider the inclusion in the MFP program of other professions like marriage and family therapists in so far as they provide services in the public sector.

**Page 182:* The Committee recommendation includes funding at last year's level for the Elderly Treatment and Outreach Program. The Committee notes that while many older Americans experience depression, dementia, anxiety and substance abuse disorders, far too often these conditions are not recognized or treated. Outreach to elderly persons conducted in places frequented by seniors, such as senior centers, meal sites, primary care settings and other locations, is needed. The Elderly Treatment and Outreach Program is the only federally funds services program dedicated specifically to the mental health care of older adults. This grant program, which helps local communities establish the infrastructure necessary to better serve the mental health needs of older adults, has been funded at approximately \$5,000,000 for fiscal years 2002-2006. The Committee urges SAMHSA to expand this program so that it can provide the evidence-based mental health outreach and treatment services to the growing population of older adults in this country.

CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION (CDC)

National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)

National Occupational Research Agenda-- page 97

NIOSH provides national and international leadership to prevent work-related illness, injury, and death by gathering information, conducting scientific research, and translating the knowledge gained into products and services. The Committee is pleased with the progress NIOSH has made in consulting with partners and stakeholders across the country to examine and update the National Occupational Research Agenda for the coming decade. The Committee expects that this updated agenda will provide an important blueprint for conducting occupational research and examining the impact of stressful workplaces on psychological functioning.

Injury Prevention and Control

Violence Against Women-- page 95

The Committee urges CDC to increase research on the psychological sequelae of violence against women and expand research on special populations and their risk for violence, including adolescents, older women, ethnic minorities, women with disabilities, and other affected populations.

Child Maltreatment—page 94

The Committee recognizes that child maltreatment is a serious public health threat with extensive short- and long-term health consequences. New avenues to support child maltreatment prevention would allow CDC to further the identification, enhancement, and dissemination of evidence-based child maltreatment prevention programs, such as positive parenting programs and home visitation programs.

Suicide Prevention-- page 95

The Committee encourages CDC to consider supporting the evaluation of suicide prevention planning, programs, and communication efforts to promote knowledge and attitude change and to reduce suicide and suicidal behavior. These evaluation efforts would support communities to identify promising and effective suicide prevention strategies that follow the public health model and build community resilience.

National Violent Death Reporting System—page 95

The Committee is supportive of the National Violent Death Reporting System, which is a State-based system that collects data from medical examiners, coroners, police, crime labs, and death certificates to understand the circumstances surrounding violent deaths. The information can be used to develop, inform, and evaluate violence prevention programs. The Committee urges the CDC to continue work with private health and education agencies as well as State agencies in the development and implementation of an injury reporting system.

Health Statistics

Eating Disorders.—page 91

The Committee is concerned about the growing incidence and health consequences of eating disorders among the population. The extent of the problem while estimated by several long-term outcome studies as being high remains unknown. The Committee urges the CDC to research the incidence and morbidity and mortality rates of eating disorders, including anorexia nervosa, bulimia, binge eating disorder, and eating disorders not otherwise specified across age, race and sex.

ADMINISTRATION ON AGING (AOA)

National Family Caregiver Support Program

Family Caregivers-- page 223

The Committee recognizes the essential role of family caregivers who provide a significant proportion of our nation's health and long-term care for the chronically ill and aging. While caring for a loved one can be rewarding, it may also put caregivers at risk for negative physical and mental health consequences. The Committee acknowledges the efforts of the AoA to provide vital support services for family caregivers through the National Family Caregiver Support Program. The Committee encourages increased support of services that may prevent or reduce the health burdens of caregiving, including individual counseling, support groups, respite care, and caregiver training. (NOTE: This program received \$156,167,000 in funding, \$107,000 above last year and \$1,980,000 above the administration request.)

U.S. Department of Education

Institute of Education Sciences

Page 310: The Committee is pleased that IES conducted a round of field-initiated research this year. The Committee recognizes the critical role that IES plays in achieving the important goals set by the No Child Left Behind Act and encourages IES to continue its progress in translating scientifically based research findings into classroom practice. The Committee supports the implementation of programs that bring advances in cognitive, developmental, educational science and neuroscience into the classroom by informing curriculum development in schools and in graduate schools of education.