

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH



NIH was able to respond efficiently to the COVID pandemic by capitalizing on decades

NIH seeks to develop a universal influenza vaccine that would generate robust, lasting protection against multiple subtypes of influenza, eliminating the need to update the vaccine each year and protect against newly emerging strains with pandemic potential. In 2022, a Phase 1 clinical trial began enrolling healthy volunteers at the NIH Clinical Center to assess the safety and efficacy of a novel universal flu vaccine candidate. Building upon the success of mRNA vaccines developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, NIH is working to apply this platform to the universal influenza vaccine development. Additionally, NIH-supported researchers are actively identifying and developing novel adjuvants for influenza vaccines to increase their immunogenicity and effectiveness. Continued investment in this research will enable the development of more broadly protective and longer-lasting influenza vaccines. The FY 2024 budget request includes \$270.0 million for universal influenza vaccine research, the same as the FY 2023 Enacted level.

### **A Reinvigorated Cancer Moonshot**

In FY 2024, the Reinvigorated Cancer Moonshot Initiative<sup>2</sup> will support priority investments to advance the goals of the Reinvigorated Cancer Moonshot, which includes cutting through red tape. Since its establishment in 2016, the Beau Biden Cancer Moonshot has supported over 250 research projects that push the boundaries of discovery and collaboration on cancer. The FY 2024 budget request includes an increase of \$50.0 million for the Cancer Moonshot from the FY 2023 Enacted level, for a total of \$716.0 million, with further increases proposed in FY 2025 and FY 2026 using mandatory funding.

Clinical trials play a prominent role in evaluating new cancer prevention, screening, and treatment approaches. NIH National Cancer Institute (NCI) funding will focus on doubling the

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<sup>1</sup> [www.nih.gov/news-events/news-releases/trial-potential-universal-flu-vaccine-opens-nih-clinical-center](https://www.nih.gov/news-events/news-releases/trial-potential-universal-flu-vaccine-opens-nih-clinical-center)

<sup>2</sup> [www.cancer.gov/research/key-initiatives/moonshot-cancer-initiative](https://www.cancer.gov/research/key-initiatives/moonshot-cancer-initiative)

number and increasing the diversity of people who enter NCI-sponsored clinical trials to develop new prevention, diagnosis, and therapeutic approaches at a more rapid pace. Funding will also support continued work towards increasing the pipeline of new cancer drugs. Additionally, the resources will fund a major trial to evaluate multicenter detection tests, the Cancer Moonshot Scholars program, and the NCI Telehealth Research Centers of Excellence, allowing the a



Serious Mental Illness (SMI) is a major, albeit less known, risk factor for COVID-19,<sup>4</sup> and people with SMI are more prone to SARS-CoV-2 infection and are more likely to require hospitalization and die from severe COVID-19. NIH supports research on many facets of mental

UNITE, launched in February 2021, is an NIH-wide, collaborative effort comprised of five workstreams with distinct but coordinated objectives to tackle the problem of racial and ethnic equity in science while developing data-driven methods to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion across the biomedical and behavioral enterprise. To thoroughly address structural racism that may exist within the enterprise, UNITE works across three domains: Health Disparities and Minority Health Research, the internal NIH workforce, and the external



in treatment for opioid use disorder, neonatal opioid exposure and maternal health, and in the pain and mental health treatments.

Opioid use is not the only alarming trend in addiction and overdose. The misuse of stimulants, such as methamphetamine, is also increasing as are deaths attributed to combining opioids and stimulants. Improved prevention and treatment strategies are needed for both opioid use disorder and co-occurring conditions such as mental health conditions and polysubstance use for a range of at-risk populations and in various settings. Recently launched HEAL programs aim to develop safe and effective treatments, as well as define approaches to improve treatment access and retention in various settings.

### **Preventing Maternal Morbidity and Mortality**

Even during a global pandemic, NIH continued to focus on other standing yet urgent public health needs. The CDC estimates 200 women die each year in the United States of maternal causes, 80 percent of which are preventable, and thousands more experience severe pregnancy-related morbidity.<sup>10,11</sup>

To address this alarming trend, NIH established an agency-wide collaboration called the Implementing a Maternal Health and Pregnancy Outcomes Vision for Everyone (IMPROVE) Initiative<sup>12</sup> which is an evidence-based approach to reduce preventable maternal pregnancy related deaths and associated health disparities for women at all stages of pregnancy. To build

Development to support research on mitigating the effects of COVID on pregnancies, lactation, and postpartum health with a focus on individuals from racial and ethnic minority groups.

In summer 2023, IMPROVE will implement a national network of Maternal Health Research Centers of Excellence to support research projects that build on previous research and take innovative, community-tailored approaches to address health disparities and risk factors for mater

replace research animal facilities with a centralized and more efficient facility, improve facilities that advance computational and data science, replace temporary