

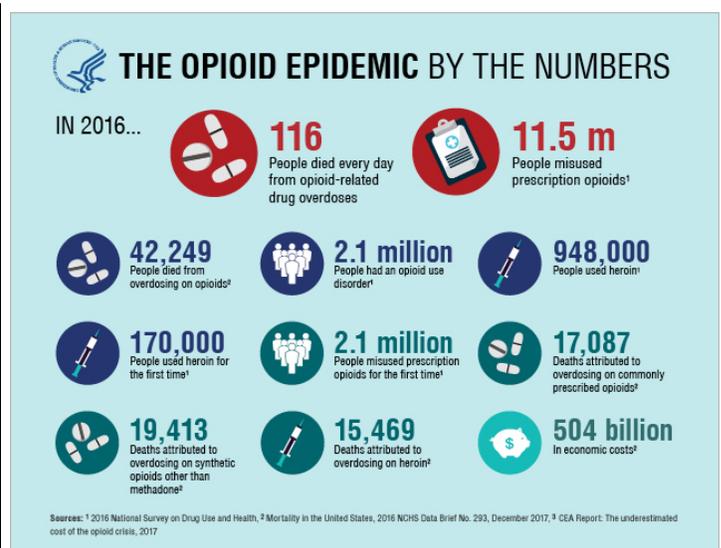
May 2018

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APA Provides Recommendations to Congress on Combatting the Opioid Crisis

In April, APA submitted two statements to Congress highlighting psychology's role in combating the opioid crisis facing our nation. The statements, authored by APA CEO Arthur C. Evans, Jr., PhD, touted APA's support for a multifaceted public health approach that utilizes psychological science to guide evidence-based prevention, treatment, and long-term recovery to reduce opioid-related morbidity and mortality.

The association provided the [first statement](#) to a House Energy and Commerce Committee hearing entitled *Combating the Opioid Crisis: Improving the Ability of Medicare and Medicaid to Provide Care for Patients*. In it, Evans emphasized psychological services are critical to both preventing and treating



opioid addiction, including through behavioral and services research and direct provision of services. He called on Congress to support Medicare and Medicaid policy changes commensurate with the scale of the opioid crisis, including allowing clinical psychologists to practice independently in all Medicare-covered treatment settings without the need for prior certification or approval by a physician.

The [second statement](#) expressed support for the *Opioid Crisis Response Act of 2018* ([S.2680](#)), which

passed the U.S. Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee on April 24th. In the letter, APA commended the Committee on its efforts to strengthen prevention and research efforts, as well as enhance access to treatment and recovery services for those facing opioid addiction.

With elections coming this fall, opioid legislation may be the only area of significant bipartisan work on health care policy this year. APA plans to focus closely on this issue in the coming months.

NIH Announces New Initiative to Address Opioid Epidemic, Dovetails with APA Recommendations

National Institutes of Health (NIH) director Francis Collins recently announced an ambitious new agency plan to stem the tide of the opioid epidemic. The [HEAL Initiative](#) (*Helping to End Addiction Long-term*) allows NIH to nearly double its commitment to opioid research from \$600 million in 2016 to \$1.1 billion in 2018.



At the seventh [National Rx Drug Abuse and Heroin Summit](#) in Atlanta, Collins noted that NIH has “worked with stakeholders and experts across scientific disciplines [including APA] and sectors to identify areas of opportunity for research to combat the opioid crisis.”

The HEAL Initiative dovetails with APA recommendations to the president’s opioid commission. Collins identified several priority areas including priorities advocated by APA in its [response](#) to the *Draft Interim Report of the President’s Commission on Combatting Drug Addiction and the Opioid Crisis* (2017). The recommendations included expanding therapeutic options for treating addiction, increasing access to non-pharmacologic treatments for chronic pain, an expanded focus on neonatal abstinence syndrome, and integrating substance use treatment within primary care and criminal justice settings.

Missing from the rollout of the HEAL Initiative, however, was any reference to the National Institute on Drug Abuse’s (NIDA) highly successful [community prevention research portfolio](#), which has demonstrated decreases in prescription drug misuse in rigorously designed randomized controlled trials. APA will continue to be a vocal advocate for primary prevention research as the HEAL Initiative moves forward.

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APA Responds to HRSA’ RFI on its Graduate Psychology Education Program

In April, APA provided comments to the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) in response to its *Request for Comment on the Graduate Psychology Education (GPE) Program*. The agency sought input from the psychology and education and training community as it looks to develop future funding opportunities to improve education and training in psychology to meet the nation’s ongoing public health challenges, including the current opioid epidemic.

Since 2002, HRSA's GPE Program has been the federal government's primary health workforce training program designed to expand interprofessional education for doctoral level clinical, counseling, and school psychology students, intern, and post-doctoral fellows. The program prepares these professionals to work in integrated care settings in medically-underserved communities across the country.

Recognizing the need for additional health-service psychologists to address opioid use disorder, APA encouraged HRSA to provide potential grantees the flexibility to not only adequately address the entire range of risk factors contributing to the opioid crisis. The association also urged the agency address the additional threats to public health from chronic diseases – including the lack of access to mental health providers. APA's comments also addressed such issues as:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Inadequate access to non-opioid pain treatments▪ Increasingly complex health conditions▪ Inequitable distribution of the psychology workforce▪ Balancing integrated primary care and specialty training | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Health inequities▪ The lack of reimbursement training of psychologists▪ Access to services in school settings▪ Substance use treatment, and▪ Family and patient education |
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APA specifically noted the incredibly difficult timing of previous funding opportunity announcements and the challenge it presents to internship programs seeking GPE funding.

Administration to Submit Rescission Package to Congress

In March, the President signed the [Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018](#) only after threatening to veto it with mere hours left before the then-current Continuing Resolution expired, leading to a government shutdown. Noting his contempt for the legislation in comments directed to Congress, he vowed to “never sign another bill like this again.” While Congress has begun to focus on the FY 2019 appropriations process, the Administration is purportedly working to renegotiate the already approved funding provided to various programs through what is known as rescissions.

According to Office of Management and Budget (OMB) director Mick Mulvaney, the administration is working to identify potential rescissions or budget cuts using the *Impoundment Control Act (ICA) of 1974*. ICA would allow the Administration to send Congress a list of proposed cuts to consider. Congress, beginning with the appropriations committees, has 25 calendar days to approve, disapprove, or amend the request. If

Congress does not act within those 25 days, the package goes to the full House of Representatives and Senate for consideration. Congress then has 45 “calendar days of continuous session” to act under ICA. The most egregious aspect of ICA is the President has the authority to “impound” or rescind for 45 days the funding for the programs included in the rescission package, even if Congress completes its responsibilities under the law. It is worth noting that the funding for programs could be impounded for months. The Administration, however, has not provided a timeline of when we can expect the release of its rescission package.

While it would only take a simple majority to move any rescission proposal forward, there is not the expectation that the Democrats will support renegotiating the just completed, albeit six-month late budget agreement. APA is an active member of the [NDD United Coalition](#) whose mission it is to save [nondefense discretionary](#) (NDD) programs from the devastating cuts of sequestration.

Act Now to Protect the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program

Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act (HEA) remains a focus of Congressional attention, even as the number of legislative days in the 115th Congress wanes. As previously reported, the House Education and the Workforce Committee held a [series of hearings](#) and passed their legislation, ***Promoting Real Opportunity, Success and Prosperity through Education Reform Act or PROSPER (HR 4508)***, out of Committee on December 13, 2017, by a partisan vote of 23-17.

The Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee has also held a succession of robust hearings but has yet to produce draft legislation reauthorizing HEA. According to Senate staff, the Committee still hopes to have a draft bill completed by this spring.

House Education and the Workforce Chair, Rep. Virginia Foxx (R-NC) recently renewed her efforts to have Congress consider HR 4508 on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives. [APA has expressed concerns with HR 4508](#). The association continues to share its opposition to specific provisions with members of the U.S. House of Representatives.

According to the [Congressional Budget Office estimates](#), HR 4508 would cut nearly \$15 billion (over ten years) in federal financial aid from post-secondary students, making college and graduate study more expensive and less accessible to many. APA recently called on its membership and the

Federal Action Network to register their concerns with their Congressional delegation about the impact of PROSPER on graduate study. Many of APA's PsychAdvocates have acted. APA appreciates their advocacy. **It is not too late to get involved.** There is still time to weigh in on this issue. **Your engagement can make a difference.**



Please **TAKE ACTION** now and let your Representative know you have concerns about the PROSPER Act provisions that put post-secondary study, including graduate study further out of reach for many. Let your Senators know that they must protect our federal investment in graduate study as part of any Higher Education Act reauthorization.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact [Jenny Smulson](#) with APA's Education Government Relations Office.

March for Psychological Science



APA is an official partner of the March for Science. On Saturday, April 14, 2018, in Washington, DC and cities around the world, scientists and science enthusiasts rallied together, once again, in support of science.

Participants of the second annual *March for Science* called for robust funding and wide communication of science. Marchers urged policymakers to use the best available scientific evidence when crafting policy. APA government relations and communications staff worked with March organizers to arrange for psychologist Dr. Susan Sorenson of the University of Pennsylvania

to speak. Dr. Sorenson's remarks highlighted both the lack of federal funding for gun-violence research and the need for increased funding to prevent further violence. She described the challenges that gun-violence researchers face and emphasized the importance of a public health approach, focusing on gun-violence prevention.

APA's *March for Science* activities reflect and reinforce the association's commitment to championing psychological science and applying psychology to address a wide range of public health and policy challenges.



Dr. Susan Sorenson

Women in Psychology Advocate for a Public Health Approach to Gun-Violence Prevention



APA continued to push legislative efforts to prevent gun violence in April. On April 17, APA staff trained 37 participants of the Leadership Institute for Women in Psychology on advocacy at the federal level and accompanied them to their congressional offices to advocate for gun-violence prevention. In their meetings, participants requested \$50 million in gun-violence research funding for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Research is one component of a comprehensive, public health approach to gun violence prevention. It is one of the multiple

strategies encouraged by APA to address gun violence. To learn more and to send a letter to your member of Congress, visit our [Gun Violence Prevention advocacy webpage](#).

Friends of NIDA Support VA Medicinal Cannabis Research Act of 2018

APA joined the Friends of NIDA in sending a [letter](#) to the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs Chairman Phil Roe (R-TN) and Ranking Member, Tim Walz (D-MN) strongly endorsing [the VA Medicinal Cannabis Research](#)

[Act of 2018](#). The letter's signatories applauded the bill's sponsors and co-sponsors' initiative "to facilitate objective research on both the potential therapeutic efficacy and risk for adverse effects of

marijuana and its constituent compounds in the treatment of pain, PTSD and other health conditions common in the veteran population."

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2018 Rally to Prevent Suicide Held on U.S. Capitol Steps



APA continues to be an essential partner in national coalitions to end suicide, using psychological research to advocate for systems of health and mental health care that identify and treat individuals at risk of suicide and their families. On Saturday, April 21, APA joined organizations such as [The Trevor Project](#), [The Jed Foundation](#) and the [American Association of Suicidology](#) in co-sponsoring the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention's first annual **Rally to Prevent Suicide**. More than 500 individuals participated in the event held on the steps of the Capitol urging members of Congress to prioritize suicide research and community behavioral health clinic (CBHC) funding, as well

as pass HR 2345, the [National Suicide Hotline Improvement Act](#). The bill would create a three-digit emergency number for individuals experiencing a mental health crisis.

[READ MORE](#)

ICYMI [In Case You Missed It]

Suinn Award Minority Achievement Program Award: Call for Nominations

The [Richard M. Suinn Award Achievement Program Award](#), established by the [Office of Ethnic Minority Affairs](#) in 1999, is presented each year to a program that has demonstrated excellence in the recruitment, retention, and graduation of ethnic minority students. The award honors [Richard M. Suinn](#), PhD, a past president of APA, for his outstanding leadership in the field of psychology and commitment to ethnic minority issues.

The Suinn Award rewards programs “for their overall commitment to cultural diversity in all phases of departmental activity; the number and percentage of ethnic minority students enrolled; and the percentage of ethnic minority students who earned doctorates in the past five years.” The Award(s) will be presented at the APA Annual Convention, August 9-12, 2018. **The deadline for submitting nominations is May 14, 2018.**

Federal Funding Opportunities

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

- [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#)

Health Resources & Services Administration

- [Grants and Cooperative Agreements](#)

National Institutes of Health

- [Research Training and Career Development Programs](#)
- [Grants and Funding](#)
- [NIH Director's Pioneer Award](#)

National Science Foundation

- [Funding Opportunities](#)
- [NSF Research Traineeship \(NRT\) program](#)
- [NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program \(GRFP\) - Graduate Research Internship Program \(GRIP\)](#)

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

- [Funding Opportunities](#)

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

- [Grant Announcements and Awards](#)
- [Project AWARE](#) (Advancing Wellness and Resilience in Education) State Education Agency grants
- [Improving Access to Overdose Treatment](#) (OD Treatment Access)

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impacting Psychology on Capitol Hill.

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