

April 15, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
United States Congress  
H-232 The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Majority Leader  
United States Congress  
H-204 The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
S-230 The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
S-220 The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Minority Leader McCarthy, Majority Leader McConnell, and Minority Leader Schumer:

Thank you for enacting important medical access and stimulus provisions in recent legislative packages to respond to the coronavirus. As you consider additional measures to stabilize the economy, the 48 undersigned organizations write to urge you to provide funding for public health and medical research activities. Specifically, we ask you to support targeted education and awareness activities on the coronavirus for chronic illness communities, and to bolster medical research that will go unfunded by nonprofits and other nongovernmental organizations due to the economic recession.

**We encourage Congress to establish a targeted fund at the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) to support education and awareness activities that provide disease-specific coronavirus information to chronic illness communities.** While protecting public health, stay-at-home orders have essentially halted the ability of nonprofits to fundraise, and nonprofits are making painful, across-the-board budget cuts. Despite these cuts, patient-focused organizations are increasing their spending to provide critical information about the coronavirus in a manner that addresses the unique needs of their communities. These education and awareness activities are helping patients access relevant information from a trusted source, and are supporting patients in navigating the healthcare system during this time of medical office closures, potential exposure to COVID-19, drug shortages, and shifts in care settings. According to a recent Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, over 89% of patients that are hospitalized for the coronavirus have one or more underlying conditions.<sup>1</sup> We urge Congress to establish a fund at the CDC to partner with patient-focused organizations to promote the information patients need to stay healthy and out of the hospital during this public health emergency.

---

<sup>1</sup> See [https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6915e3.htm?s\\_cid=mm6915e3\\_w](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6915e3.htm?s_cid=mm6915e3_w), April 8, 2020

**We also encourage Congress to provide additional bridge funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to support the broad medical research community.** In an effort to stay afloat during this time of economic recession, many nonprofits are cutting millions of dollars from their research portfolios. Many investigators who are critical to developing treatments and improving the quality of patient care will receive less funds, or go unfunded, until nonprofits can return to their normal level of research support. Further, research projects across the nation have been temporarily suspended, and it is expected the resumption of these projects will require additional and unanticipated funding. To address this gap, Congress should step in to maintain the nation's research and development capacity by providing additional funding to the NIH to make up for lost dollars from the private sector, and the interruption of projects from basic to clinical. This additional NIH funding should support both existing research projects that were negatively impacted by the pandemic, as well as new projects which will go unfunded including vulnerable early- to mid-career awards.

Thank you for your tireless efforts to protect the health and livelihood of the nation. We appreciate your consideration for the above funding requests to ensure patients can access credible and specific information on COVID-19, and to sustain our research communities. For additional information, please contact Sarah Buchanan, Director of Advocacy at the Crohn's & Colitis Foundation, at [sbuchanan@crohnscolitisfoundation.org](mailto:sbuchanan@crohnscolitisfoundation.org).

Sincerely,

American Association of Neuromuscular & Electrodiagnostic Medicine  
American Autoimmune Related Diseases Association  
American Heart Association  
American Kidney Fund  
American Liver Foundation  
American Neurogastroenterology and Motility Society  
Arthritis Foundation  
Association for Clinical and Translational Science  
Celiac Disease Foundation  
Chronic Disease Coalition  
Clinical Research Forum  
Coalition for Clinical and Translational Science  
Community Liver Alliance  
Crohn's & Colitis Foundation  
Cystic Fibrosis Foundation  
Digestive Disease National Coalition  
Dystonia Advocacy Network  
Dystonia Medical Research Foundation  
GBS|CIDP Foundation International  
Global Colon Cancer Association  
Global Healthy Living Foundation  
Global Liver Institute

Immune Deficiency Foundation  
International Foundation for Gastrointestinal Disorders  
Interstitial Cystitis Association  
Lupus and Allied Diseases Association, Inc.  
Lymphatic Education & Research Network  
METAvivor  
Muscular Dystrophy Association  
National Alliance on Mental Illness  
National Alopecia Areata Foundation  
National Kidney Foundation  
National Pancreas Foundation  
NephCure Kidney International  
Patient Services, Incorporated  
Pennsylvania Society of Gastroenterology  
Project Sleep  
Pulmonary Hypertension Association  
Restless Legs Syndrome Foundation  
Scleroderma Foundation  
Sleep Research Society  
The American Society for Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition  
The Greg and Cathy Griffith Family Foundation  
The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society  
The Marfan Foundation  
The Oley Foundation  
United Ostomy Associations of America  
US Hereditary Angioedema Association