ARTHRITIS FOUNDATION®
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News from the Arthritis Foundation
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Arthritis Foundation Statement on the Sequester

The Arthritis Foundation and the 50 million Americans, including 300,000 children, who live with arthritis pain, disability and increased medical costs, are extremely disappointed that Congress and the Administration have been unable to find a viable solution to avoid cuts that impact all Americans. The sequester has significant implications for the arthritis community, from access to safe medications to improving the nation's health through prevention and cutting-edge research. Specifically, the Arthritis Foundation is concerned with the nearly 6 percent budget cuts now set to impact arthritis research and prevention efforts at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and National Institutes of Health (NIH).

Although the March 1, 2013 deadline to avoid the beginning of the sequestration has passed, it is not too late to develop a balanced approach to deficit reduction that avoids further cuts to discretionary programs. The current cuts are deep, and Americans will soon begin to feel their impact. These cuts could be catastrophic and may harm programs and services we rely on, including drug inspection, review and approval, public health officials working to help prevent arthritis, as well as medical research that seeks a cure for arthritis and other disabling chronic conditions. We urge Congress to act now.

The Arthritis Foundation recognizes that Congress must set budget priorities. However, we believe that additional reductions in funding for prevention and biomedical research at the CDC, FDA and NIH must be avoided. Cuts to the CDC will restrict access to evidence-based interventions to manage arthritis and other chronic conditions; cuts to the FDA will delay review and approval of much needed, life-changing arthritis medications; and cuts to NIH research will stifle innovation and discovery, and delay access to life-changing arthritis treatments.

These programs have already carried more than their fair share of the budget-cutting burden. We urge Congress to work with the Administration to develop a plan that is balanced and does not further weaken these vital discretionary programs.

About the Arthritis Foundation

Striking one in every five adults and 300,000 children, arthritis is the nation's leading cause of disability. The Arthritis Foundation (www.arthritis.org) is committed to raising awareness and reducing the unacceptable impact of this serious and painful disease, which can severely damage joints and rob people of living life to its fullest. The Foundation funds life-changing research that has restored mobility in patients for more than six decades; fights for health care policies that improve the lives of the millions who live with arthritis; and partners with families to provide empowering programs and information.

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