

Arthritis Foundation Statement on the Official FY 2018 President's Budget Request

May 23, 2017

Today, the president released the administration's official budget request for fiscal year (FY) 2018, which would make deep cuts to health programs across health agencies and would have severe implications for Medicaid and other programs that deliver vital health care services to people with arthritis. While the Arthritis Foundation agrees that health care reform is necessary and our country needs to make important spending decisions, it should not be at the expense of people with arthritis, which now affects one in four Americans and the prevalence is growing.

Specifically, this budget would cut nearly **\$6 billion from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), with more than \$120 million of those cuts impacting the National Institute of Arthritis & Musculoskeletal & Skin Diseases (NIAMS)**. These cuts would severely hinder the ability of the NIH to support research that is vital to bringing the promise of new treatments and ultimately a cure to people with arthritis. **The budget also cuts the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) by nearly \$400 million**, which would further erode the potential set forth in the 21st Century Cures Act.

The budget would cut more than \$1 billion from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), including more than \$200 million from the Chronic Disease Division that houses the Arthritis Program. Furthermore, the budget would create a block grant, giving states the flexibility to fund chronic disease programs as they deem fit. This could greatly disadvantage smaller programs like the Arthritis Program, and could jeopardize the future of the program altogether.

In addition, **the budget would cut Medicaid by more than \$600 billion over 10 years**, and would dramatically change the way Medicaid is funded in the states, threatening access to care to millions of people with chronic diseases who rely on Medicaid in order to have access to timely, consistent care.

The Arthritis Foundation remains committed to breaking down barriers to care for people with arthritis and improving population health through strong investments in federal health programs. The Arthritis Foundation calls on Congress to protect the lives of all Americans by rejecting the president's budget and declaring a strong commitment to public health in fiscal year 2018.