

Campaign for Cures Toolkit



Research!America’s national voter education initiative, Campaign for Cures, intends to elevate medical research and innovation in the national conversation this election season, and empower voters to engage with candidates running for national office. If elected, will candidates champion public and private sector research to help find cures and treatments for costly and deadly diseases? Will they support initiatives to accelerate medical progress? Now is the time to ask them.

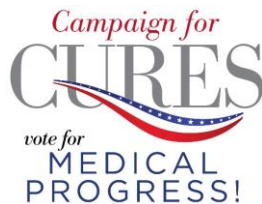
To encourage voters to share their views on the importance of research and innovation with candidates, we have compiled a toolkit that is designed to make it easier for individuals to get involved-- whether it’s through writing letters to the editor or engaging on social media. Visit www.campaignforcures.org for more information.

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About Research!America

Research!America is the nation's largest nonprofit public education and advocacy alliance working to make research to improve health a higher national priority. Founded in 1989, Research!America is supported by member organizations representing 125 million Americans. Visit <http://www.researchamerica.org>.





General Campaign Information

What is Campaign for Cures?

Campaign for Cures is a national voter education initiative launched by Research!America and partners to elevate medical research and innovation in the national conversation this election season. Through strategic communications, grassroots and on-the-ground activities, the initiative will educate voters and candidates running for national office about the health and economic benefits of public and private sector research.

Why Should You Participate?

Medical innovation must be a higher national priority to address current and emerging health threats, strengthen our economy and maintain our nation's competitive edge in science and technology. We must educate candidates running for national office about the importance of speeding medical progress to benefit the lives of all Americans. Increasing public awareness about the research ecosystem and the role of the public and private sector in the discovery, development and delivery of lifesaving treatments to patients is critical to boosting federal support for medical and health research. A majority of Americans say elected officials are not doing enough to combat deadly diseases, according to polling commissioned by Research!America.

How to Participate

Take the [pledge](#) to engage candidates about medical research during the election season. Share your personal stories, photos and videos on how research improved quality of life. Send candidates a message about medical progress via email or social media. We've put together a toolkit with sample messages, as well as templates for an op-ed or letter to the editor. The more voices engaged in conversations about medical progress, the more likely candidates will respond.

Arm Yourself with Information

Read our [fact sheets](#) on the health conditions and treatments, including Alzheimer's disease, obesity, vaccines and Parkinson's disease.

Research!America has been gauging public opinion on research to improve health since 1992, including issues related to public and private sector research. Review our latest [polling data](#).

Review background information on the range of [issues that Research!America advocates for](#): federal funding for research, strengthening private sector R&D, disease prevention and public health, global health, social sciences and behavioral research, and more.

Campaign for Cures Goals

- Elevate medical research in the national conversation during the election season and galvanize support among voters and candidates running for national office. Cultivate more champions for medical innovation in Congress and the White House.
- Encourage voters to ask candidates their views on issues affecting the pace of medical progress. Disseminate positions of candidates to voters through various communications channels.
- Increase public awareness on how public and private sector research contributes to the health and economic security of our nation.

Sample Questions

While the best questions for candidates are ones that reflect your own priorities and beliefs, here are some sample questions and facts to get you started:

- In an increasingly globalized world, how will you ensure that America can combat diseases like MERS and Ebola coming from other countries?
- How will you ensure America continues to make progress against devastating diseases like diabetes and cancer?
- There are over 10,000 diseases with few treatments and cures. How do you plan to create new cures to combat these deadly diseases?
- Government has been investing in medical research for more than a century, but funding has slipped over the last decade. Would that change if you are elected?
- What do you plan to do to spur medical research that helps wounded warriors?
- Do you think it's important for America to maintain its global leadership in science and technology?
- Many people don't realize that the US life sciences industry accounts for 80% of all research and development conducted worldwide into new medical treatments and cures. What will you do to boost private-sector medical innovation in the US?
- How will you support initiatives to promote careers in science, math and other technical fields for our young generation?
- Mental illness not only cripples millions of Americans' lives, but also poses a severe economic threat to our nation, costing the US billions in lost earnings per year. How will you ensure this number does not continue to increase?
- We spend over \$3 trillion on healthcare every year, but 30% of that is wasted on medical errors, unnecessary services, and excessive red tape. Health services research provides the tools that healthcare providers need to combat this. How would you respond to the proposed cuts to this essential research and how would you support this research in the future?
- For most rare diseases, there are no cures and few, if any, proven and effective treatments. How do you plan to increase research to find cures for rare diseases?
- A majority of Americans (69%) say it is important to conduct medical or health research to understand and eliminate health disparities. What would you do to increase federal support for this type of research?
- Every minute and 24 seconds, an American dies from coronary heart disease. What would you do to make medical research a higher national priority to help reduce the death rate?
- An estimated 12,000 children are diagnosed with cancer annually. How would you accelerate the pace of cancer research to save lives?
- Nearly 30 million Americans have diabetes, and the economic burden of it is staggering: at least \$200 billion each year. Do you think medical research could be a solution to rising health care costs?

Sample Facts

Research Takes Cents

- The combined salaries of the top ten highest-paid athletes in 2014 totaled more than \$640 million - enough to fund all [NIH-sponsored head](#) and [spine injury](#) research for more than 3 years.
- In 2014, the profits of the top 10 grossing movies totaled \$2.5 billion – which could fund [NIH-sponsored research for eye disease and vision disorders](#) for 3 years.
- In 2014, Americans spent \$48 billion on coffee, enough to fund all [NIH-sponsored](#) sleep research for over 200 years.

America Speaks

- 70% of Americans agree that basic scientific research advances the frontiers of knowledge and should be supported by the federal government even if it brings no immediate benefits.
- 79% agree that research investments are critical to job creation, [technological breakthroughs](#) and economic growth.
- 78% of Americans agree it is important for our nation to [support research that focuses on improving how our health care system is functioning.](#)

The Human Toll

- Half of all men and one-third of all women in the US will develop [cancer](#) in their lifetimes. ^Δ
- Nearly 30 million Americans have [diabetes](#), and at least 208,000 are under 20 years-old. ⁺
- Every 40 seconds someone in the U.S. experiences a [stroke](#), and every 4 minutes the stroke is fatal. [^]
- 10% of our population, many of whom are children, are struggling with a rare disease. [‡]

The Economic Burden

- [Diabetes](#) absorbs more than \$1 out of every \$5 spent on health care in the United States. ⁺
- The total economic burden of [heart disease](#) in America was \$215.6 billion in 2011. [^]
- The total cost of [stroke](#) was estimated at \$33 billion in 2011 alone. [^]
- The total economic burden of [multiple sclerosis \(MS\)](#) can exceed \$69,000 per patient, per year. [°]

If Nothing Changes...

- Up to one million Americans were living with [Parkinson's disease](#) in 2013; that number is predicted to double by 2040. [•]
- Based on current trends, the annual cost of treating [cancer](#) will increase to \$158 billion a year by 2020. ^Δ
- Between 2010 and 2030, the cumulative U.S. economic burden of [cardiovascular diseases](#) could surpass \$1 trillion. ^{**}
- As the prevalence of [vision loss and blindness](#) grows, the economic burden is expected to reach \$717 billion by 2050. ^{**}
- As many as 1 in 3 American adults will have [diabetes](#), by 2050, based on present trends. ⁺

The Promise of Research

- If we could achieve a 5% drop in the number of Americans with [high blood pressure](#), in 5 years we could save \$25 billion. ^{*}
- By preventing as few as 5% of new chronic conditions- Medicare and Medicaid could save \$5.5 billion a year by 2030. ^{^^}
- \$6 are saved for every \$1 Medicaid invests in providing [fluoridated water to children](#) under 6 years-old. ^{oo}
- For every [HIV](#) infection prevented, an estimated \$355,000 is saved. ^{**}

Then, Now, Imagine...

Our nation's investment in research saves lives, combats disability, and protects against population health threats. THEN... We had disease. NOW... We have hope. IMAGINE... Cures. For a PDF of the Then, Now Imagine series, [click here](#).

Cystic Fibrosis

Then » Cystic fibrosis (CF), an inherited disease of the mucus and sweat glands, had a median survival rate of 10 years in the 1960s.

Now » Early screening, powerful new antibiotics and advancements in lung transplants have almost quadrupled the life expectancy and improved quality of those with CF.

Imagine » Finding a cure.

Heart Disease

Then » It was not uncommon for Americans to die of heart attacks in their 50s or 60s.

Now » Thanks to advancements in medical technology like the stents and balloons used in angioplasty, heart disease fatalities have been cut by 57% over the past 3 decades.

Imagine » Eliminating premature deaths due to heart disease.

Alzheimer's Disease

Then » Progressive, unstoppable, and irreversible problems with memory, thinking, communication, and behavior were widely but inaccurately considered a normal part of aging.

Now » Alzheimer's disease is recognized as a discrete health condition and basic research is fueling new drugs and other interventions for risk-reduction, prevention, detection, diagnosis, treatment, and cure.

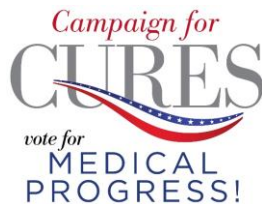
Imagine » Aging and cognitively thriving without the threat of dementia.

HIV/ AIDS

Then » 130,000 new cases of HIV infection occurred annually during the peak of the AIDS epidemic in the 1980s, and most cases were fatal.

Now » The development of antiretroviral treatments has slowed the progression of the disease in infected individuals and has brought the incidence rate to 50,000 new cases annually.

Imagine » A universal HIV vaccine and complete eradication of HIV/AIDS.



Using Social Media to Engage Candidates and Promote Medical Progress

Social media is one of the best ways to get the word out, and we hope you will help us use it to ask candidates to join the conversation about medical progress along with the official hashtag: **#Campaign4Cures**

We've listed a few sample Tweets and Facebook posts to help guide your conversations:

General Messages for the Public

Twitter

A majority of Americans (79%) say investing in research is important to job creation and economic growth.
<http://bit.ly/1HZm5l1> #Campaign4Cures

A majority of Americans (53%) say research has benefited their family's overall health. Do you agree?
<http://bit.ly/1HZm5l1> #Campaign4Cures

What will your candidates do to strengthen our nation's global leadership in science & technology? Vote for medical progress #Campaign4Cures

Ask your candidates to take a stand on medical progress. Will they stall it or fuel it? <http://bit.ly/1LPo8wB>
#Campaign4Cures

Medical research matters to Americans. Does it matter to candidates in #Election2016? Visit <http://bit.ly/1LPo8wB> to find out. #Campaign4Cures

Facebook

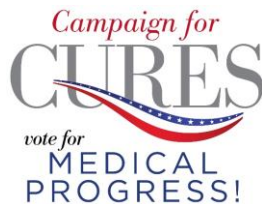
Patients in all 50 states are anxiously awaiting new therapies and cures for diseases. Will your candidates make medical progress a priority? #Campaign4Cures

It's time for medical research and innovation to be a key priority in Washington. What will your candidates do to advance medical research? #Campaign4Cures

#Election2016 could be a call for action to make medical research and innovation a top national priority. Vote for medical progress! #Campaign4Cures

Many elected officials have taken research & innovation for granted. We hope our candidates won't! Vote for medical progress! #Campaign4Cures

Three-quarters of Americans say it's important to know where candidates stand on scientific & medical research. "Like" if you agree and visit us at <http://bit.ly/1LPo8wB> to learn more. #Campaign4Cures



General Messages Seeking Answers from Candidates

Innovation

.@xxx How will you encourage scientific innovations that improve the health of Americans? #Campaign4Cures

.@xxx What must the US do to remain a leader of global medical innovation with other nations increasing their investments? #Campaign4Cures

.@xxx What should be changed about STEM education to ensure the scientific leaders of tomorrow are in the US? #Campaign4Cures

Economy

.@xxx How important is medical progress to supporting state and national economies? #Campaign4Cures

.@xxx What will you do to support job opportunities in your community to ensure medical progress? #Campaign4Cures

.@xxx What can Congress learn from medical research to improve healthcare and lower Medicare and Medicaid costs? #Campaign4Cures

Funding

.@xxx How or where can we find resources for agencies that support medical progress? #Campaign4Cures

.@xxx What amount of funding will best accelerate medical progress? #Campaign4Cures

.@xxx Do you think our nation's budget is sufficient to accelerate medical progress? #Campaign4Cures

Awareness

.@xxx What has medical research done for you & your constituents? #Campaign4Cures

.@xxx What is your favorite medical advancement of the past 2 years & what do you hope to see in your term? #Campaign4Cures

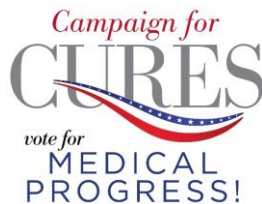
.@xxx How will you use the expertise of scientists & doctors to inform your healthcare decisions? #Campaign4Cures

Customizable Messages

.@xxx What can you do to highlight the importance of [DISEASE/AGENCY] and rally the support of other leaders? #Campaign4Cures

.@xxx Where can more dollars be found to fight/support [DISEASE/AGENCY] over the next 2 years? #Campaign4Cures

.@xxx How has [DISEASE/AGENCY] impacted your constituents and how will you support medical research for better treatments? #Campaign4Cures



"Did you know..."/ Educational Statements

[%s taken from RIA Polls]

General

.@xxx Did you know nearly [60%] Americans say elected officials don't pay enough attention to combating diseases?
#Campaign4Cures

.@xxx Did you know [65%] Americans think the US should be a global leader in medical, science, and technology research? #Campaign4Cures

.@xxx Did you know more than half of Americans think medical research will reduce healthcare costs in America?
#Campaign4Cures

Disease Specific

.@xxx Did you know [DISEASE] impacts ### Americans and costs the nation ###, but only receives ### in research support? #Campaign4Cures

.@xxx Did you know progress in medical research could save ### in costs from [DISEASE] each year? #Campaign4Cures

.@xxx Did you know XXX treatment for [DISEASE] stems from federally funded research by [AGENCY]? #Campaign4Cures

Agency Specific

Thanks to @NIH research, deaths from heart disease have decreased by 50% over the last 40 yrs. Vote for medical progress! #Campaign4Cures

.@xxx Did you know [AGENCY] devotes ### to fighting [DISEASE] and employs ### Americans, some from your constituency? #Campaign4Cures

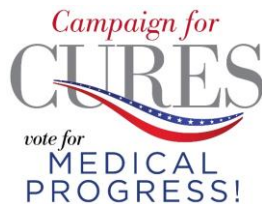
.@xxx Did you know [AGENCY] has been the source of XXX and XXX US innovations now used around the world?
#Campaign4Cures

.@xxx Did you know that every dollar spent on medical research at [AGENCY] produces ### in economic returns?
#Campaign4Cures

Engage with Campaign for Cures on social media:

Facebook: <http://on.fb.me/1O2azfG>

Twitter: [/Campaign4Cures](https://twitter.com/Campaign4Cures)



Writing an Op-Ed in Support of Medical Research

Many publications are likely to focus on local political races from now through November, creating the opportunity to highlight the role of federal funding and policies in achieving medical progress through writing an op-ed. With limited space for op-eds and plenty of competition for that space, we encourage you to personalize the op-ed as much as possible to describe the impact of federally-funded medical research on your quality of life and/or the local economy.

Follow an outlet's submission guidelines to submit an op-ed. Most publications ask that you keep an op-ed to 500-700 words or shorter, and provide your contact information upon submission. Feel free to use the templates below for your needs. We encourage personalizing these templates as much as possible to capture your own voice or writing style.

Sample Op-Ed for Patients and Advocates

[Insert personal story and connection to medical research]. In the U.S. [X] of people [live with or diagnosed with] [disease]. Without sustained public support for research, patients like [myself / loved one] are left with the uncertainty that new treatments and therapies will be developed to fight this disease and improve quality of life. With the election season underway, voters must ask candidates what they would do to advance medical research and innovation.

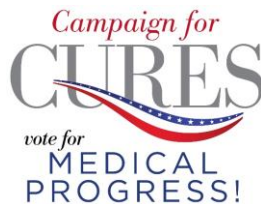
Public funding for research has not kept pace with scientific opportunity for more than a decade. The ripple effect from our nation's underinvestment in research and development can be felt from bench to bedside. The National Institutes of Health (NIH), our nation's premiere research institution, has lost more than 20 percent of its purchasing power since 2003, resulting in a grant success rate of just one in six. Many promising studies are left on the cutting room floor because of limited resources.

Another concern for patients is that we may lose our best and brightest young scientists who are discouraged from continuing their careers in research as a result of dwindling resources. The percent of all NIH grant funding awarded to scientists under the age of 36 has dropped from 5.6% in 1980 to 1.3% in 2012. Some early career researchers are choosing to move to other countries where investments in research are strengthening.

Deadly and costly health threats [like X disease] continue to contribute to our nation's deficit. Nearly half (46%) of Americans say research to improve health is part of the solution to rising health care costs, according to polling commissioned by Research!America. The urgency to elevate medical and health research into the national conversation could not be greater.

During election season, candidates for Congress and the Presidency are engaging with voters on the campaign trail. Now is the time for us to ask candidates at town hall meetings, rallies and other events and on social media, if they are willing to accept the status quo if elected. Research!America's national voter education initiative provides tools and resources to help voters reach out to their candidates at www.campaignforcures.org.

[Citizens of state and/or city] deserve to know whether candidates will champion research and innovation. For patients living with [x], it can mean the difference between sickness and health.



Sample Op-Ed for Researchers

(If you are a researcher at an academic institution, contact your communications office for support with your op-ed)

As a researcher at [institution], I've seen the effects of stagnant public funding for research as promising studies are delayed or abandoned because of limited resources. Research that could potentially lead to discoveries to improve treatment, or one day cure diseases like [XYZ], has been severely impacted by budget cuts and short-sighted policies of elected officials. With the election season underway, it is important for us to educate candidates running for national office about the importance of publicly-funded studies and policies to spur private sector innovation to help improve the health and economic security of Americans.

A majority of Americans (53%) say that their family's health has been improved by medical research, according to public opinion polling commissioned by Research!America. But public funding for research has not kept pace with scientific opportunity for more than a decade. The ripple effect from our nation's underinvestment in research and development can be felt from bench to bedside. The National Institutes of Health (NIH), our nation's premiere research institution, has lost more than 20 percent of its purchasing power since 2003, resulting in a grant success rate of just one in six.

[Describe how your lab or other labs at your institution have been affected by stagnant funding].

With innovative research at risk, the urgency to elevate medical and health research into the national conversation could not be greater. During election season, candidates for Congress and the Presidency are engaging with voters on the campaign trail. Now is the time for us to ask candidates at town hall meetings, rallies and other events and on social media, if they are willing to accept the status quo or make research a higher national priority if elected.

Research!America's national voter education initiative provides tools and resources to help voters reach out to their candidates at www.campaignforcures.org.

[Citizens of state and/or city] deserve to know whether candidates will champion research and innovation. So much promising research is waiting in the wings. We need the commitment of our elected officials to bring it to fruition.

Writing a Letter to the Editor to Encourage Responses from Candidates

Submitting a letter to the editor can be a timely way to influence the conversation surrounding medical progress and further amplify the need for candidates to provide a position on medical research funding and whether they will support policies that spur private-sector medical innovation. Letters to the editor are often submitted one to two days following the publication of an article or editorial in a newspaper, local news website or magazine, citing the article in question and bridging to a point or counterpoint. The article you respond to might be about Congressional or Presidential candidates, jobs and the local economy, or the prevalence of a specific disease in your community-- all of these topics and more can be linked back to research.

You can check the guidelines for submitting a letter to the editor of your local paper, but a common practice is to keep them short (150 to 200 words) and include all contact information so the outlet can verify the author and follow up with any questions.

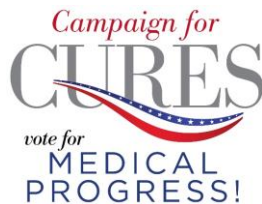
Sample LTE for Patients and Advocates

Without sustained federal support for medical research and innovation, patients like [myself / loved one] are left with the uncertainty that new treatments and therapies will be developed to fight this disease and improve quality of life. The National Institutes of Health (NIH), our nation's premiere research institution, has lost more than 20 percent of its purchasing power since 2003. As a result, innovative research has been stalled or left on the cutting room floor. With the election season underway, voters must ask candidates what they would do to advance medical research. Two-thirds of Americans (66%) say it's important for candidates running for office to assign a high priority to funding medical research, according to public opinion polling commissioned by Research!America. [Citizens of state and/or city] deserve to know whether candidates will champion research and innovation. Research!America's national voter education initiative provides tools and resources to help voters reach out to their candidates at www.campaignforcures.org. For patients living with [X], it can mean the difference between sickness and health.

Sample LTE for Researchers

(If you are a researcher at an academic institution, contact your communications office for support with your LTE)

As a researcher at [institution], I've seen the effects of stagnant funding for research as promising studies for diseases such as [XYZ] are delayed or abandoned because of limited resources. Federal budget cuts and short-sighted policies have severely impacted medical innovation in the U.S. With the election season underway, it is critical for us to educate candidates running for national office about the importance of federally-funded research and private sector innovation to improve health. In fact, two-thirds of Americans (66%) say it's important for candidates running for office to assign a high priority to funding medical research, according to public opinion polling commissioned by Research!America. [Citizens of state and/or city] deserve to know whether candidates will champion research and innovation. Research!America's national voter education initiative provides tools and resources to help voters reach out to their candidates at www.campaignforcures.org. So much promising research is waiting in the wings. We need the commitment of our elected officials to bring it to fruition.



Submitting a Live-Read Public Service Announcement (PSA) to Your Local Radio Station

Campaign for Cures is focused on elevating medical progress and research in the national conversation among voters, candidates and the media. One way to do that is by submitting a live-read radio PSA, which can emphasize the past success of medical research and the need to support federal medical research funding and private-sector activity so that we can continue to pursue treatments or cures for deadly or debilitating diseases.

Radio stations may post guidelines on their website for submitting a PSA. If not, one option is to email the script and your contact information to a PSA, advertising or digital media manager at the station. Keep in mind that during election season it is very competitive to earn this free air time. Traditionally, live-read PSAs are either submitted in 15- or 30-second formats. We've provided templates in the hopes they will save you time.

Sample PSAs

00:15 Life-saving medical research makes a difference for patients every day. This election season, ask Congressional and Presidential candidates if they will support medical progress. For more information visit campaignforcures.org

00:30 Did you know that federal funding for medical research continues to decline, even as more Americans face Alzheimer's, Diabetes, Cancer and other health threats? During this election season ask Congressional and Presidential candidates running for office whether they would make funding for medical research a higher national priority. For more information visit campaignforcures.org.

Topic Specific Talking Points- Alzheimer's Disease

Use the following talking points to guide conversations with candidates about medical research and find out your candidates' position on accelerating medical progress. This example has been customized for a specific audience. Research!America would be happy to work with you to tailor specific advocacy materials that meet your needs. *Please contact Rachel Weissman at rweissman@researchamerica.org or 571-482-2716 to discuss additional materials.*

Questions for Town Halls, meetings with candidates or other events:

- We are facing a problem of epic proportions with Alzheimer's disease both in costs to the healthcare system and in the toll it takes on families. What do you think can be done to speed up treatment or a cure?
- According to the Alzheimer's Association, the cost to treat Alzheimer's and other dementias will rise to over \$1 trillion by 2050. If elected, what would you do to speed neurological research and ensure that these diseases do not continue to wreak havoc on our country?
- [Describe your personal connection to Alzheimer's disease]. What will you do to highlight the importance of Alzheimer's disease research and rally the support of your colleagues?

Quick Facts on [Alzheimer's disease](#) in America:

- 5.3 million Americans have Alzheimer's disease, more than the populations of New Hampshire and Iowa combined.
- By 2050, the annual cost of caring for Americans with Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia will surpass \$1 trillion.
- Our nation spends \$214 billion per year on Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia.
- As of 2015, Alzheimer's disease is the sixth leading cause of death for Americans. Between 2000 and 2010, deaths attributed to Alzheimer's disease increased by 68%
- More than 15 million Americans provided 17.7 million hours of unpaid care to family members or friends with Alzheimer's disease in 2014. This care is valued at over \$220 billion.
- A treatment that delays Alzheimer's by just 5 years could save more than \$375 billion by 2050.

