

TALKING POINTS FOR S. 800 AND H.R. 1469,
ENHANCING THE STATURE AND VISIBILITY OF MEDICAL REHABILITATION
RESEARCH AT THE NIH ACT

- On March 19, 2015, Senators Mark Kirk (R-Il.) and Michael Bennet (D-CO) and Congressmen Jim Langevin (D-RI) and Gregg Harper (R-MS) introduced companion bills (S. 800; H.R. 1469) to improve, coordinate, and enhance medical rehabilitation research at the National Institutes of Health (NIH).
- The legislation will build upon the conclusions and recommendations of an NIH Blue Ribbon Panel on Medical Rehabilitation Research which issued a comprehensive report in January 2013. The panel concluded that rehabilitation research was not thriving at NIH and that reforms are needed.
- NIH conducts and supports approximately \$300 million in medical rehabilitation research annually, \$70 million of which is supported by the National Center for Medical Rehabilitation Research (NCMRR) located in the Eunice Shriver National Institute for Child Health and Human Development (NICHD).
- This research focuses on assisting people with injuries, illnesses, disabilities and chronic conditions maximize their health, ability to function, live independently, work if possible, and participate fully in community activities. It is a critical area of research for a growing number of Americans with disabling conditions across the age spectrum.
- The legislation focuses on building greater links within NIH to help coordinate rehabilitation research across Institutes and Centers to streamline rehabilitation research priorities and maximize the current federal investment in this area of research.
- The legislation involves the Office of the NIH Director in coordination activities, raising the stature of rehabilitation science across the NIH's 27 Institutes and Centers.
- The legislation calls for a Rehabilitation Research Plan to be updated every five years following a scientific conference or workshop. The existing research plan has not been updated since 1993.
- The legislation provides for an annual progress report; ties co-funding of medical rehabilitation research projects to the Research Plan, and includes a definition of medical rehabilitation research to ensure consistent tracking of rehabilitation research across NIH.
- The legislation is bipartisan, has been fully vetted with National Institutes of Health officials, rehabilitation research organizations, clinical associations and disability and consumer groups.
- The legislation is expected to have no budgetary impact.