

# With Research Cuts, a Troubling Prognosis

**A letter from Donald Kearns MD, Sanford Burnham Prebys Board of Trustees Chair and President Emeritus of Rady Children's Hospital-San Diego**

As both a trustee at Sanford Burnham Prebys and as a long-time pediatric otolaryngologist (ears, nose and throat surgeon), I have watched as innovations in biomedical research have eventually found their way to the clinic and sometimes into my operating room.

This process, concept to cure, is the result of many decades of brilliant, hard work by scientists and physicians supported and sustained by forward-thinking grants and awards from federal agencies like the National Institutes of Health. The system has made U.S. medical science unrivaled in the world. It has improved and saved millions of lives.

And now it is being dismantled.

With callous disregard and utter illogic, the Trump Administration is undermining the American scientific enterprise, radically cutting funding to research universities and nonprofit institutions like Sanford Burnham Prebys, cancelling long-standing programs like the Women's Health Initiative and backing off promising new technologies because they do not fit with prevailing political ideologies.

I see the consequences every day: Scientists who suddenly lose previously approved grants and have fewer opportunities to advance their research. Labs and departments that must cut back staff because critical funding is gone. Students who must rethink their careers and futures in science.

I worry too about the future, not just about the young doctors and scientists who may now be forced to choose a different path, but also about delayed development of new drugs and treatments or drugs and treatments that are never discovered because we did not make the necessary investments.

We are all hurt by what is happening now in science. We are all poorer for the actions taken by the current administration and its proxies. I fear we will all become sicker too.

**Donald Kearns, MD**

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