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Statement
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November 6, 2003

AMERICAN PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION STATEMENT ON CERTAIN GRANTS FUNDED BY NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH

The American Psychiatric Association released the following statement today regarding a recent challenge to certain grants being funded by the National Institutes of Health:

The APA strongly endorses the rigorous procedures used by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), a component of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), to review the scientific and public health merits of the approximately 67,000 research grant applications it receives annually. The two-tired NIH review process consists of a scientific peer review of research proposals followed by a policy-oriented review conducted by statutorily established National Advisory Councils, the membership of which include public representatives from fields outside of health science. This review system is the bedrock of NIH grant funding decisions and, in turn, of our Nation's global pre-eminence in biomedical and behavioral research.

We issue this statement in the context of a recent challenge, based on ideologic grounds, to approximately 200 NIH-funded research grants that are concerned with understanding, treating, and preventing adverse health outcomes associated largely with various sexual behaviors. Disparate medical, psychological, and behavioral conditions related to sexuality and sexual behaviors, including a significant proportion of AIDS/HIV cases, constitute a substantial public health burden, in the U.S. and globally, in terms of both economic costs and human suffering and distress.

The APA lauds the NIH for supporting a small but vitally necessary portfolio of research grants in these areas. We also commend DHHS for supporting the programs of other federal agencies that operate under its purview to translate research-based information into public health applications and to disseminate these interventions to the public at large and, where appropriate, to high risk populations.

The APA calls on the Administration and Congress to uphold and defend core principles that underpin the processes of rigorous scientific review that play an essential role in guiding the Nation's investment in life-saving biomedical and behavioral research.

The American Psychiatric Association is a national medical specialty society, founded in 1844, whose more than 35,000 physician members specialize in the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of mental illnesses including substance use disorders. For more information, visit the APA Web site at http://www.psych.org/.

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