

Harry Nelson Published “Cures Act: Healthcare innovation, grab bag giveaway, or both?”



[Harry Nelson](#) contributed an article to The Hill titled [“Cures Act:](#)

[Healthcare innovation, grab bag giveaway, or both?”](#).

For all the media attention that it is getting, the impending repeal of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) that Republicans are promising when the 115th Congress convenes is arguably only the second most significant piece of legislation in terms of its impact on U.S. healthcare.

The real showstopper may very well be the 21st Century Cures Act (the Cures Act), which has passed the House and Senate and is currently awaiting President Obama’s signature. Ultimately, it could have a more immediate impact.

The Cures Act has managed to bring together bipartisan support from Democrats and Republicans and from patients and big pharma to support its allocation of \$4.8 billion for health research over the next decade. Its highlights include \$1.8 billion for the Cancer Moonshot Initiative championed by Vice President Joe Biden in memory of his son, Beau, whose diagnosis of brain cancer led to an untimely passing at age 46.

In addition, the Cures Act allocates \$1.5 billion for President Obama’s Precision Medicine Initiative, which focuses on identifying treatment and prevention strategies specifically tailored to people’s unique characteristics, including their genome sequence, microbiome composition, health history, lifestyle, and diet.

Another \$1.5 billion of the funding is focused on the BRAIN initiative to advance understanding of the brain to help find a cure for Alzheimer’s.

While the bulk of funding is focused on biotech research, the addiction treatment community is excited by federal funding of an additional \$1 billion on anti-opioid efforts. Among other promising developments, the Cures Act creates a new position of Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Abuse, to be appointed by the president...

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