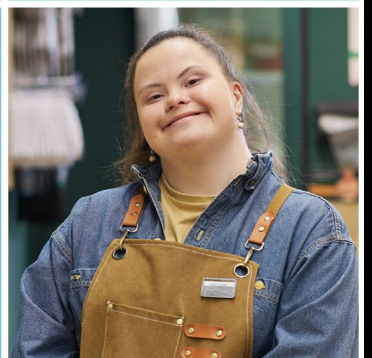
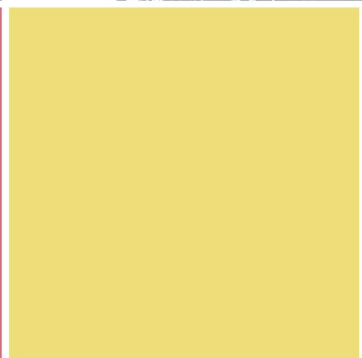
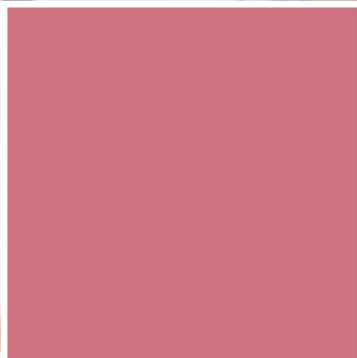
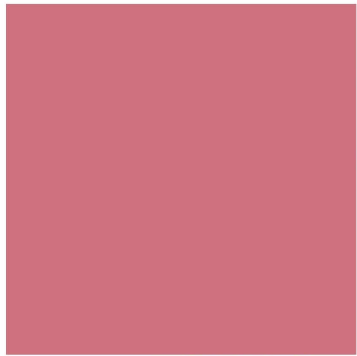
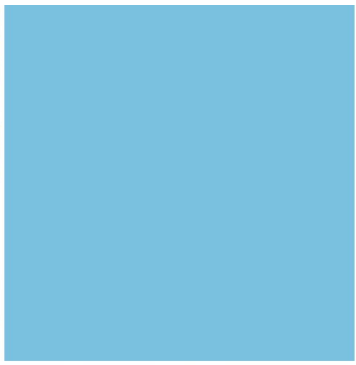


NIH Strategic Plan for Disability Health Research FY26-FY30

Theresa Cruz
Adam Politis

NACHHD Council Meeting
July 8, 2026

Introduction



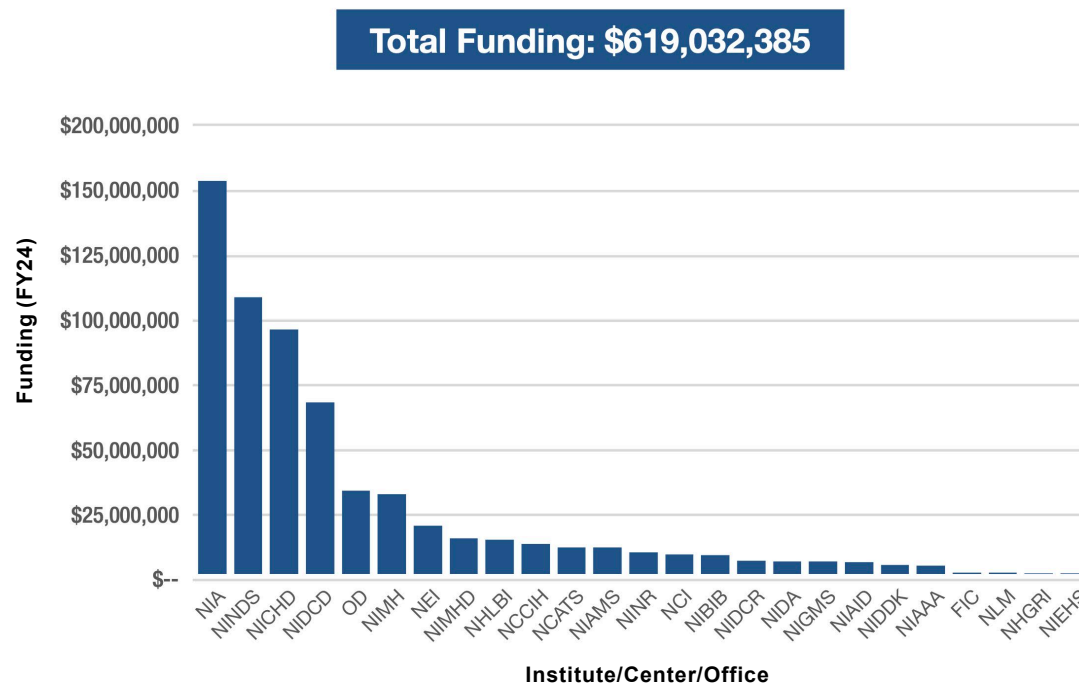
Disability Health Research

Disability health research seeks to understand and address the effects of **medical conditions, nonmedical factors, and their interaction** on the health and well-being of people with disabilities.

It **centers the *person* rather than the *disability***, and emphasizes that disabled people have health needs and goals both related and unrelated to their disabilities.

Disability Health Research Landscape at NIH

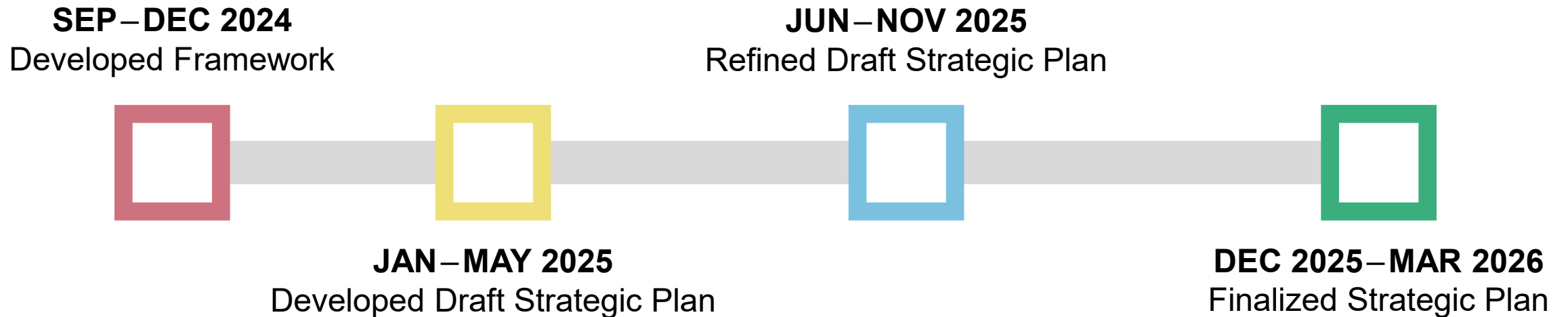
Funding Landscape



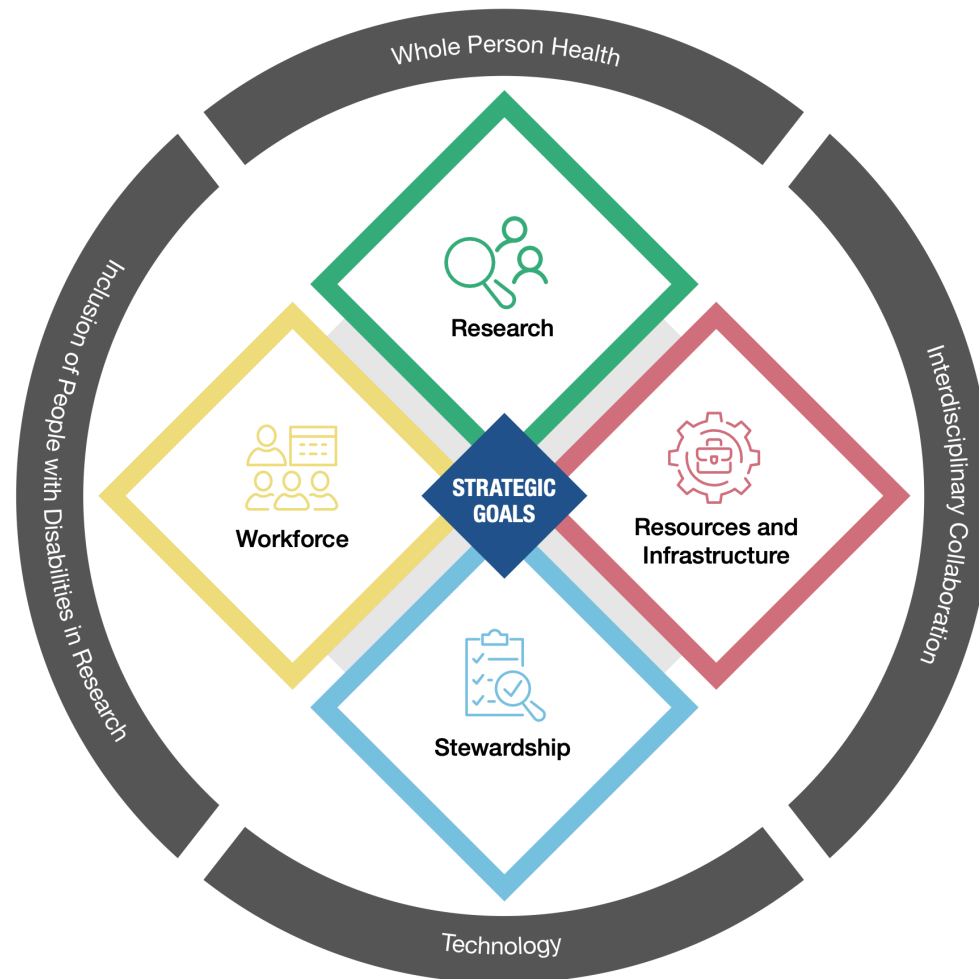
Major Developments

- **2022:** NIH Advisory Committee to the Director Subgroup on Individuals with Disabilities Report
- **2023:** NIH Health Disparity Designation for People with Disabilities
- **2024-2025:** Establishment of DPCPSI Disability Health Research Program (DHRP), NIH Disability Health Research Coordinating Committee (DHRCC), Council of Councils Disability Health Research Working Group (DHRWG)

Strategic Planning Process



Strategic Plan Framework



Crosscutting Themes

Crosscutting Themes



Whole Person Health



Inclusion of People with Disabilities in Research



Interdisciplinary Collaboration



Technology

Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Research

Advance the science of disability health by supporting innovative, rigorous, person-centered research

- Objective 1.1:** Catalyze advances in **conceptualizing, defining, and measuring disability** for health research
- Objective 1.2:** Promote research that examines the **biological, behavioral, sociocultural, and environmental factors** that influence the health and well-being of people with disabilities across the lifespan
- Objective 1.3:** Support research to **reduce disparities and optimize health outcomes** for people with disabilities
- Objective 1.4:** Foster research on **health promotion and disease prevention** for people with disabilities

Goal 2: Workforce

Foster a highly skilled, multidisciplinary, and sustainable disability health research workforce

- Objective 2.1:** Support the development of **training opportunities** in disability health research
- Objective 2.2:** Promote and support **policies, programs, and opportunities to advance the careers** of disability health researchers
- Objective 2.3:** Support the development and implementation of **disability health curricula** in biomedical and behavioral research training

Goal 3: Resources and Infrastructure

Support accessible, state-of-the-art disability health research resources and infrastructure

- Objective 3.1:** Develop and disseminate resources to help researchers and institutions ensure that their research **facilities, equipment, technology, and information are accessible** per federal laws and regulations
- Objective 3.2:** Develop programs, policies, and resources to **maximize the inclusion of people with disabilities** as participants in clinical research
- Objective 3.3:** Support the development of **collaborative disability health research networks**
- Objective 3.4:** Promote **responsible management and sharing of disability data** in NIH-funded research

Goal 4: Stewardship

Engage in collaborative, responsible, and ethical management of disability health research activities

Objective 4.1: Promote robust **public participation and community engagement** in disability health research activities

Objective 4.2: Regularly **evaluate the effectiveness** of disability health research organizational structures and processes

Objective 4.3: Ensure disability health research activities are conducted according to the **highest standards of scientific integrity**

Next Steps

Upcoming Activities

Community Engagement Plan

- Develop roadmap for how NIH will work collaboratively with community partners

Resources for Investigators and NIH Staff

- Identify and share best practices for planning, conducting, communicating, and evaluating disability health research

Highlighted Topic

- Stimulate disability health research across NIH Institute, Center, and Office mission areas

Challenge/Prize Competition

- Promote inclusion of people with disabilities in clinical research

Acknowledgements

NIH Institute, Center, and Office Partners

- 24 ICs and 18 Offices & Programs

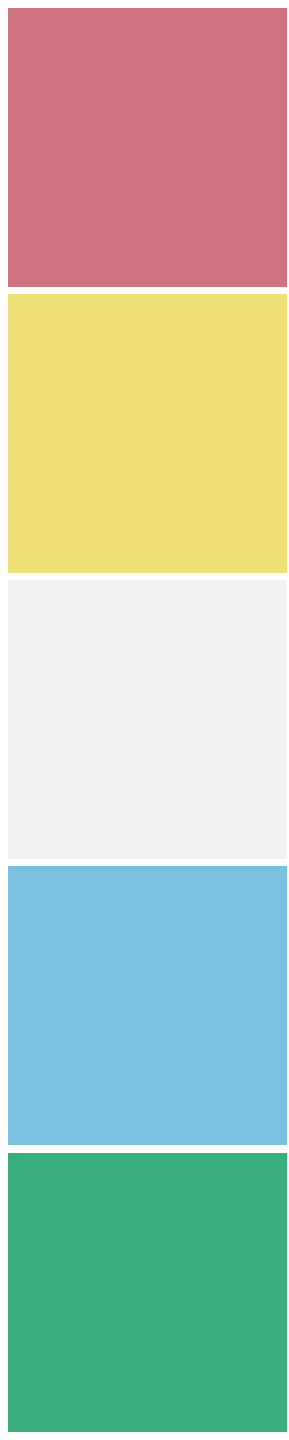
NIH Disability Health Research Coordinating Committee

- Co-Chairs: Larissa Avilés-Santa (NIH/NIMHD), Theresa Cruz (NIH/NICHHD), Adam Politis (NIH/OD)

Council of Councils Disability Health Research Working Group

- Co-Chairs: Russell Van Gelder (Univ. of Washington), Adam Politis (NIH/OD)

External Organizations and Individuals



Questions?