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By Theresa Defino

### **HHS Formally Establishes ARPA-H, Names Acting Director**

HHS has named Adam H. Russell, chief scientist at the Applied Research Laboratory for Intelligence and Security at the University of Maryland, acting director and formally announced the establishment of the Advanced Research Project Agency for Health (ARPA-H), created by Congress to be an independent agency within NIH. In a May 25 announcement, Secretary Xavier Becerra said officials were “ecstatic” about the hiring of Russell, who HHS said will “help launch ARPA-H” and “guide the early stages of building the administrative structure of the agency and oversee the hiring of initial operational staff to ensure the agency is stood up as effectively and efficiently as possible.”

A permanent director will be appointed by President Biden, HHS said. According to a May 27 *Federal Register* notice, ARPA-H “provides leadership for high-risk, high-reward biomedical and health research to speed application and implementation of health breakthroughs equitably”; “creates, supports, and manages programs to catalyze the development of transformative, evidenced-based, use-driven capabilities, platforms, and technologies in a range of biomedical and health research areas”; “facilitates partnerships and collaboration among government, academia, industry, and other sectors to accelerate the translation of innovation into meaningful and measurable benefits for the nation”; and “converts use-driven research into tangible, sustainable solutions for patients.” It will have a Treatment Innovation Office, Health Promotion and Disease Detection Office, and an Innovation and Entrepreneurship Office, among others.

[Link to HHS announcement](#)

[Link to Federal Register notice](#)

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