

CURE Frequently Asked Questions

Question: What is the Commonwealth Universal Research Enhancement (CURE) Program?

Answer: Act 77 of 2001 directs the Department of Health to establish a health research program. Under this program, research grants are awarded for clinical, health services, and biomedical research. Act 77 establishes two types of health research grants — formula grants and competitive grants. Regardless of the type of grant awarded, all funds must be used in a way that is consistent with the research priorities as established by the Department of Health. The priorities are developed in conjunction with the Health Research Advisory Committee. All entities receiving funds will be accountable and must follow certain monitoring and evaluation procedures. Research results will be shared with health care practitioners and other researchers, and will be available to the public, so that Pennsylvanians ultimately benefit from this significant new investment of public resources. An annual report of progress on the CURE research projects is posted on the Department's Tobacco Settlement/Act 77 web page.



Question: Who is eligible for funds?

Answer: Eligible applicants for the competitive grants must be located in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and can be nonprofit entities or institutions of higher education that conduct research, licensed hospitals, local health departments or entities in the private sector. Eligibility for the formula grants is limited to nonprofit institutions, hospitals and institutions of higher education that have received funds from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) or the National Cancer Institute (NCI) during the previous three consecutive federal fiscal years.

Question: What is the difference between formula grants and competitive grants?

Answer: Formula grants are awarded to certain institutions in Pennsylvania that will receive a percentage of the overall research budget based on a formula that considers previous performance in securing federal research funds either from NIH or NCI. Non-formula grants are awarded competitively. Each year, the Department of Health will issue a Request for Applications (RFA) calling for research projects that are consistent with the research priorities established by the Department in conjunction with the advisory committee. Proposals will be selected for funding through a peer review process similar to the process used by the NIH.

Question: Can I be considered for the advisory committee?

Answer: The Governor has the authority to make four appointments and leaders of the General Assembly have four as well. Members appointed by the Governor must possess expertise in health care or research, with representation by public health professionals, clinical investigators, practicing clinicians and institution-based research specialists. Depending on the appointing authority, terms of office for the advisory committee members vary from two to six years. If you want to be considered when vacancies occur, please send a letter of interest and summary of qualifications to the Governor's Office of Public Liaison (Attn: Boards and Commissions), 508 C Main Capitol, Harrisburg, PA 17120 with a copy to the Health Research Program. You may also contact the Pennsylvania General Assembly. Indicate your interest in serving on the Health Research Advisory Committee pursuant to Act 77 of 2001, Chapter 9.

Question: When will the RFA for the competitive grants be issued?

Answer: The RFA will be issued once a year, after the research priorities are finalized. Prior to finalizing the priorities, the Department and Health Research Advisory Committee may seek public comments on proposed research priorities. Announcements of the public comment process, final research priorities and the RFA will be posted on the web.

Question: Can I be put on a list to receive information about RFA's? How?

Answer: Yes, email your request to ra-healthresearch@state.pa.us (attention: Health Research RFA mailing list) or call 717-231-2825.

Question: Can I get information about when the Advisory Committee will meet?

Answer: Continue to monitor this website or the Pennsylvania Bulletin for meeting notices. You may also contact the Health Research Program to be placed on a mailing list to receive notices of advisory committee meetings and public hearings.