

## Spinal Cord Research Advisory Committee

### Meeting Logistics

Item	Description
Date	January 21, 2021
Time	9:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
Location	Call-in only Public call-in for listen only
Purpose/Focus	Spinal Cord Research Advisory Committee meeting – public
Notetaker	Health Research Office Staff Sargents stenographer
Call-in and Skype	Microsoft Teams meeting <b>Join on your computer or mobile app</b> <a href="#">Click here to join the meeting</a> <b>Or call in (audio only)</b> <a href="#">+1 267-332-8737</a> Phone Conference ID: 600 843 399#

### Attendees

#### SCRAC Members:

##### In Attendance:

- Jacob G. Chalfin, “Jake,” Chair
- Benjamin Abramoff, MD, MS, Director of Spinal Cord Injury Services at the Penn Institute for Rehabilitation Medicine and Assistant Professor of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at the University of Pennsylvania.
- Alex Charlton, father of daughter with spinal cord injury
- Itzhak Fischer, Ph.D, Professor and Chair of the Department of Neurobiology and Anatomy at Drexel University College of Medicine and co-director of the Spinal Cord Center
- Michael Boninger, MD, Professor and UPMC Endowed Vice Chair for Research in the Department of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation at the University of Pittsburgh, School of Medicine
- Rory A. Cooper, Ph.D., veteran with a spinal cord injury, Founding Director of the Human Engineering Research Laboratories, VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System, Pittsburgh PA; FISA/PVA Distinguished Professor of the Department of Rehabilitation Science and Technology and Associate Dean for Inclusion, School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, University of Pittsburgh
- Elizabeth Tyler-Kabara, MD, neurosurgeon, Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh
- Joel Winer, MD, neurosurgeon, Wellspan Health, York, PA

##### Not In Attendance:

- Franklin Caldera, D.O., M.B.A. Chief Medical Officer at the University of Pennsylvania Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation.

#### Department of Health Staff Present:

- Christopher Albright, Administration Officer, Health Research Office
- Penny E. Harris, M.Ed., CAC, LPC, Director, Health Research Office
- Tirzah McClinton, Project Officer, Health Research Office
- Meghna Patel, MHA, Deputy Secretary for Health Innovation

- Emily Roussel, Executive Advisor to Deputy Secretary Meghna Patel

Not In Attendance:

- Pamela Brown, Management Technician, Health Research Office Meaghan Abbott
- Director of Intergovernmental Affairs, Deputy Secretary for Health

Others In Attendance: N/A

**Agenda**

ID	Description	Owner	Time
1	Welcome, Introductions and Agenda Review	Jacob Chalfin, Chair	9:30 am – 9:40 am
2	Review and approval of October 14, 2020 minutes	Jacob Chalfin, Chair	9:40 am – 9:45 am
3	Update on 2020-2021 Request for Application	Jacob Chalfin, Chair	9:45 am – 9:55 am
4	a) Review of SCRAC Applications Procedural Overview b) Confidentiality Statement form	Jacob Chalfin, Chair and DOH staff	9:55 am – 10:30 am
5	Spinal Cord Injury Research Priorities for 2021-2022	Jacob Chalfinm Chair	10:30 am – 10:35 am
6	Tiered Approach for 2021-2022	Jacob Chalfin, Chair	10:35 am – 10:40 am
7	Open Discussion	All attendees	10:40 am – 10:55 am
8	Closing and Next Steps	Jacob Chalfin, Chair	10:55 - 11:00 am

## Discussion

ID	Discussion
1	<i>Jacob Chalfin</i> , Chair, introduced himself. Committee members, and DOH staff introduced themselves. There were no individuals from the public in attendance. <i>Jacob Chalfin</i> , reviewed Agenda.
2	<i>Alex Charlton</i> moved to accept the meeting minutes of October 14, 2020. <i>Dr. Cooper</i> second. No discussion. No opposition or abstentions. The motion passed unanimously.
3	<p>Update on 2020-2021 Request for Application (RFA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letters of Intent (LOI) were due on December 22, 2020.</li> <li>• The vendor’s Peer Review Panel is scheduled to review grant proposals on February 17, 2021.</li> <li>• <i>Dr. Fischer</i> inquired regarding the number of applicants per tier. <i>Keith Fickel</i> stated that since the RFP is in the blackout period, normally it is not possible to disclose this information. He explained that the blackout period ensures that confidentiality and integrity is maintained and that there is no outside influence. He agreed to inquire with the Chief Counsel regarding making an exception, regarding disclosing the number of proposals that were submitted and to provide the Committee with a response within 24 hours.</li> <li>• <i>Jacob Chalfin</i> informed <i>Dr. Fischer</i> and the Committee members that although there were proposals submitted, this did not necessarily translate to an equal number of applications, as all who submitted LOIs did not submit a grant application.</li> <li>• <i>Jacob Chalfin</i> suggested that reasons for the low application submission rate could possibly be due to COVID, the short turnaround timeframe and due date during the holidays. Also, that there was not enough promotion of the grant.</li> <li>• Unspent funds may be rolled over into the 2021-2022 grant year.</li> <li>• <i>Dr. Fischer</i> suggested that knowing the Tiers where there were fewer submissions would help the Committee know what communities to outreach to in the future, in order to improve the number of submissions.</li> <li>• <i>Jacob Chalfin</i> asked how long after the Peer Review Panel completed it’s work, would be before the Committee could review applications. <i>Penny Harris</i> suggested that it could be within a week.</li> </ul>
4	<p>Follow up to last meeting</p> <p>a) Review of SCRAC Applications Procedural Overview</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The SCRAC is still working through the language of its grant proposal review procedure.</li> <li>• <i>Jacob Chalfin</i> inquired with the DOH whether the Committee could make recommendations to increase the amount of funding for a proposal that it deemed to be noble. Also, whether the Committee could decide not to fund a proposal. <i>Penny Harris</i> suggested that an award amount could be lowered and that it would be the Committee’s decision regarding who would be funded and how much.</li> <li>• <i>Dr. Fischer</i> moved to approve the First Cycle of Procedures document. <i>Dr. Abramoff</i> second. No discussion. No opposition or abstentions. The motion passed unanimously.</li> </ul> <p>b) Confidentiality Statement form</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A fillable form was provided to Committee members, this should be completed, saved as a PDF and returned to the Health Research Office as soon as possible.</li> </ul>
5	<p>Spinal Cord Injury Research Priorities for 2021-2022</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Dr. Fischer</i> made a motion to adopt language in a document outlining the research priorities for 2021-2022. This will be posted on the Department website. This will. <i>Dr. Winer</i> second. No discussion. No opposition or abstentions. The motion passed unanimously.</li> </ul>
6	Tiered Approach for 2021-2022

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Committee will vote on how the tiers will be funded for the next grant year at the April meeting.</li> </ul>
7	<p>Open Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There was further discussion regarding the Confidentiality form and whether there would be any Committee members not participating in the proposal reviews. <i>Jacob Chalfin</i> was able to confirm that there will be full participation in the proposal reviews from all Committee members.</li> </ul>
8	<p><i>Jacob Chalfin</i> expressed appreciation for the committee members time, guidance and involvement on the call. <i>Dr. Fischer</i> made a motion to adjourn. <i>Dr. Cooper</i> second. Meeting concluded at 10:25 am.</p>