

## Meeting Logistics

<b>Item</b>	<b>Spinal Cord Research Advisory Committee (SCRAC)</b>
<b>Date</b>	October 19, 2022
<b>Time</b>	9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.
<b>Location</b>	Call-in Only
<b>Purpose/Focus</b>	Spinal Cord Research Advisory Committee Meeting
<b>Notetaker</b>	Health Research Office staff, Pennsylvania Department of Health

## 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.
- Franklin Caldera, D.O., M.B.A. Chief Medical Officer at the University of Pennsylvania Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation.
- Alex Charlton, father of a family member with a spinal cord injury
- 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

#### Not In Attendance:

- Elizabeth Tyler-Kabara, MD, Neurosurgeon
- Joel Winer, MD, Neurosurgeon, Wellspan Health, York, PA
- 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

### Department of Health Staff Present:

- William Cramer, Director, Health Research Office
- Pamela Brown, Public Health Program Associate, Health Research Office
- Galen Graham, Public Health Program Administrator, Health Research Office
- Stephanie Landis, Administrative Officer, Health Research Office

### Others In Attendance:

- None

**Agenda**

<b>ID</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Time</b>
1	Welcome, Introductions and Agenda Review	Jacob Chalfin, Chair	9:30 am – 9:40 am
2	Review and approval of April 2022 minutes	Jacob Chalfin, Chair	9:40 am – 9:45 am
3	Vote on 2023 Priorities	Committee Member	9:45 am – 10:00 am
4	Tier Funding Levels for 2023 RFA	Committee Members / DOH Staff	10:00 am – 10:10 am
5	End of serve term for SCRAC Members	Committee Members / DOH Staff	10:10 am – 10:35 am
6	Open Discussion – outstanding business or questions	Committee Members	10:35 am – 10:40 am
7	Discuss new questions or concerns from committee members	All attendee	10:40 am – 10:45 am
8	Closing and Next Steps	Jacob Chalfin, Chair	10:45 - 11:00 am

## Discussion

ID	Discussion
1	<i>Jacob Chalfin</i> , Chair, introduced himself and did role call of Committee members and DOH staff, and reviewed the agenda.
2	Review and approve the meeting minutes from the SCRAC meeting on April 21, 2022. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Dr. Cooper</i> moved to accept the meeting minutes of April 21, 2022. <i>Dr. Caldera</i> second. No discussion. No opposition or abstentions. <b>The motion passed unanimously.</b></li> </ul>
3	Vote on 2023 Priorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As a review it was discussed that the current research priorities remain the same to support the timely distribution of the 2023 RFA the current research priorities are as follows:</li> <li>• Pharmacologic, biologic, medical device, brain stimulus, and rehabilitative approaches and techniques.</li> <li>• Preference will be given to those projects and techniques that seek to change the nature and course of the injury.</li> <li>• To ensure funded research addresses the gap in translation of discovery to human study and proposal, further preference will be given to research that is strategically translational or translatable relative to aims and outcomes.</li> <li>• Finally, further preference will be given to research strategies that represent either potential or existing collaboration with industry, whether in the development and trial of biologics, pharmacologics, device, or novel therapeutic rehabilitative treatments in combination with these developments.</li> <li>• <i>Dr. Cooper</i> made a motion to accept. <i>Dr. Abramoff</i> second. No discussion. No opposition or abstentions. <b>The motion passed unanimously.</b></li> <li>• 2024 Priorities to be discussed at the January 2023 Meeting.</li> </ul>

4 Tier Funding Levels for 2023 RFA

- The funds that are released annually for this grant amount to a total of one million. As you recall last year the funding amount was two million to account for the prior year of funding as well. This year we have caught up and are back down to the annual one million dollar amount.
- As such, the tier levels are being adjusted as discussed in the prior meeting to the follow levels:
  - Tier 1: \$100,000
  - Tier 2: \$150,000
  - Tier 3: \$ 250,000
- *Mr. Charlton* made a motion to approve tier funding levels for 2023 RFA. *Dr. Cooper* Second. No discussion. No opposition or abstentions. **The motion passed unanimously.**
- *Dr. Cooper* inquired how to increase funding in the future. *William Cramer* recommended observing and planning over the next 6 months. The one million dollars was set in the statute, and would require it going back through legislature to change the statute. Research would need to demonstrate success and progress. Recommended waiting for the second year of the new administration.

5 End of serve term for SCRAC Members

- In the Summer of 2019, SOH Levine appointed the members of SCRAC.
  - Statute states members are to be appointed for a term of two years by the Secretary of Health.
  - Terms for all members are coming to an end.
  - New applications will be sent out within the next month to all existing board members. They may re-apply if they wish to continue to sit on the board.
- Accomplishments and Recap of the Past Two Years
  - Establishing research priorities for the betterment of people living with spinal cord injuries
  - Developed a process for SCRAC Final Review
  - Established funding tiers for research projects
  - Developed language for the RFA
- *Galen Graham* will email applications to Committee members. Members will need to fill out the application and email it to Galen Graham. Program will forward applications to the Secretary of Health for decision as was done in the past.
- *Dr. Boninger* resigned and his role will need to be filled. *Dr. Winer* has not been attending SCRAC Meetings and will need his role filled.
- *Mr. Chalfin* requested recommendations for replacements. *Dr. Abramoff* knows neurosurgeons who may be interested in applying for a position on the Committee.
- Members who would like to make nominations for new Committee members are to email the information to Galen Graham.

6	<p>Open Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Status Update on 2021 Spinal Cord RFA67-127 selected Proposals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Proposals are currently being reviewed by HRO Staff.</li> <li>○ Proposals are set to tentatively go to the Office of Procurement the end of November 2022. Proposals are not held and sent in batch, each application is sent as HRO Staff completes their review.</li> <li>○ Timeline is dependent on how quickly the Principal Investigator’s respond to HRO Staff’s requests for changes. Once the proposals make it through the HRO approval process they must still go through the review by the Office of Procurement, and the signature process in Offices outside of the Health Research Office.</li> <li>○ <i>William Cramer</i> will reach out to Legal Staff to inquire about what information we can release at this time.</li> <li>○ <i>Pamela Brown</i> stated once fully executed documents are received HRO will post for payment. It will take up to 45 days for Comptroller to release funds from the date the invoice is posted for payment.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Status Update on 2022 Spinal Cord RFA67-153 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Tentative timeline is to have HRO complete their portion of the review by the end of November. There is no timeline for offices outside of HRO to complete their reviews of RFA67-153.</li> <li>○ PeerNet will not be used for the submission of the 2022 Spinal Cord RFA67-153 applications due to the challenges faced with 2021 Spinal Cord RFA67-127 applications.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
7	<p>Public Comment and Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None</li> </ul>
8	<p>Closing and Next Steps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Next public meeting is Wednesday, February 15, 2022, from 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.</li> <li>• <i>Jacob Chalfin</i> expressed appreciation for the Department and Committee’s time and participation.</li> <li>• <i>Dr. Cooper</i> made a motion to adjourn. <i>Dr. Abramoff</i> second. No opposition or abstentions. <b>The motion passed unanimously.</b></li> </ul>