

Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs (CDMRP): At a Glance



Background

The Office of Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs (CDMRP) was established by the Department of Defense (DOD) in 1993 to eliminate breast cancer. Over the years, numerous other cancers and disease programs have been added. CDMRP is currently a collection of 36 programs that target research funding to specific diseases including cancer.

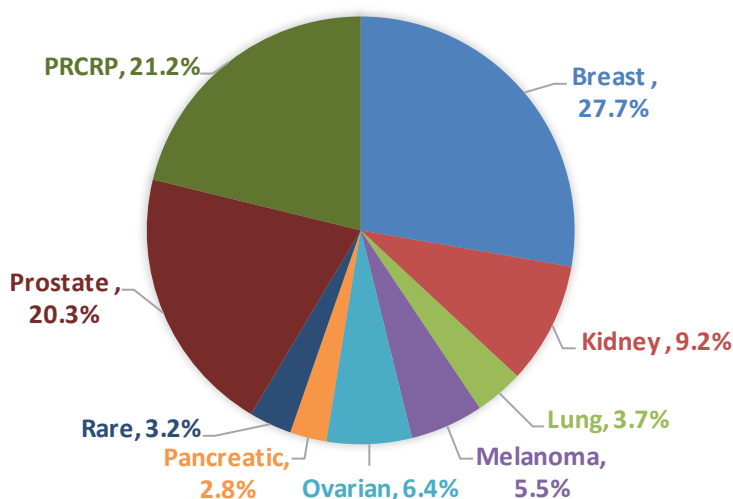
Funding

Congress appropriates funds for the CDMRP on an annual basis in the Defense Appropriations Act specifying the funding of research programs based on constituent and advocacy group input. For FY 2021, Congress appropriated \$1.5 billion across the 36 research programs. This includes a total of \$543 million for a variety of cancer types and the Peer Reviewed Cancer Research Program (PRCRP).¹

Since the inception of CDMRP, breast cancer funding has garnered the highest cumulative funding at \$3.9 billion, over one-fourth of the \$14.7 billion total appropriations for CDMRP funded research programs through 2021. Prostate cancer is the second highest funded cancer over the life of the program at \$2 billion.

While CDMRP is highly focused on cancer, 49 percent of the lifetime appropriations have been for non-cancer conditions, with the FY 2021 program consisting of 36 percent cancer and 64 percent non-cancer programs.

CDMRP FUNDING OF CANCER RESEARCH (BY PERCENTAGE FOR FY 2021)



Key Funding Facts

- For FY 2021, Congress appropriated a total of \$543 million total for cancer-specific programs.
- CDMRP appropriations directed toward cancer-specific research for FY 2021 represents an amount that is 8.3% of the \$6.5 billion allocated to the National Cancer Institute (NCI) for the same year.
- Throughout CDMRP history, \$7.5 billion total has been spent on cancer research programming.
- \$3.9 billion spent on breast cancer research since 1992.

¹ All calculations based on Congressional Appropriations. About Us. Funding History <https://cdmrp.army.mil/about/fundinghistory>

CDMRP Program Development

The development of a disease-specific program occurs in four phases. First, Congress initiates funds for a new disease specific program. Next, the disease specific program goals and priorities are created in a stakeholder meeting with key scientists and consumers drawn from leading government, academic, private and consumer organizations. The third phase convenes an Integrated Panel (IP) of experts, which outlines the program vision, investment strategy, and award mechanisms. The last phase involves the development of the program announcement and dissemination to the scientific community.²

CDMRP Program Review Process

Review of grant proposals for CDMRP is based on a two-tiered review process designed to balance scientific rigor in Tier 1 with programmatic goals in Tier 2. Peer review panels include researchers, clinicians, and consumers with subject area expertise. The CDMRP review structure is based on recommendations offered in a 1993 IOM report titled, *Strategies for Managing the Breast Cancer Research Program: A Report to the U.S. Army Medical Research and Development Command*.

CDMRP Two-Tier Review Process

Tier 1: Scientific Review

- ✓ Assessed by discipline specific panels for scientific merit.
- ✓ Impact assessment based on the criteria set forth in the program announcements.

Tier 2: Programmatic Review

- ✓ Uses a comparison based process to evaluate proposals.
- ✓ Proposals evaluated for their relevance to programmatic goals, alignment with research gaps, and contribution to portfolio balance.

Last reviewed March 2022

² Bertram, Kenneth et al. "The Department of Defense Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program: Innovations in the Federal Funding of Biomedical Research." *Clinical Cancer Research* 8 (2002): 957-962.