

NATIONAL CENTER ON MINORITY HEALTH AND HEALTH DISPARITIES

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National Center on Minority Health
and Health Disparities
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Mission:

The mission of the National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NCMHD) is to promote minority health and to lead, coordinate, support, and assess the NIH effort to reduce and ultimately eliminate health disparities. In this effort NCMHD will conduct and support basic, clinical, social, and behavioral research; promote research infrastructure and training; foster emerging programs; disseminate information; and reach out to minority and other health disparity communities.

The specific goals and purposes of the Center include the following:

- To assist in the development of an integrated national health research agenda, across disciplines, that reflects the current and emerging health needs of racial and ethnic minorities and other health disparity groups.
- To promote and facilitate the creation of a robust minority health research environment with sustained funding for a wide breadth of studies — basic, clinical, and population research; studies on the influences of health processes; and research on the societal, cultural, and environmental dimensions of health — all aimed at identifying potential risk factors for disparate health outcomes.
- To promote, assist, and support research capacity building activities in the minority and medically underserved communities, focusing on research infrastructure development, faculty career development, and increasing the number of underrepresented minority students and students from health disparity groups with an interest in careers in biomedical and bio-behavioral research.

Selected Achievements and Initiatives:

Health Disparities Centers of Excellence: The NCMHD Health Disparities Centers of Excellence Program provides funding to support researchers and clinical scientists at both minority serving and majority serving academic institutions, and organizations for conducting rigorous basic science, clinical, epidemiological and community-based participatory research needed to accomplish objectives of the NCMHD. Across the nation, the centers are focusing on the priority research areas such as cancer, cardiovascular disease, stroke, diabetes and the health of mothers and their infants. Recently, the NCMHD expanded the program from 60 to 71 awards, which are now located in 29 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. These new awards support the development of resources and infrastructure at these institutions as a prelude to initiating full-scale health disparities research, community outreach, and training aimed at ultimately eliminating health disparities.

Research Endowment Program: The NCMHD Research Endowment Program builds research and training capacity in institutions that make significant investments in the education and training of individuals from health disparity populations. NCMHD-endowed institutions are using endowment funds to enhance research capacity and infrastructure for research and training, which includes: strengthening teaching programs in the biomedical and

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behavioral sciences and related areas; making physical plant improvements; establishing endowed chairs and programs; obtaining equipment for instruction and research; enhancing student recruitment and retention; providing merit-based scholarships; recruiting and retaining faculty; developing instruction delivery systems and information technology in areas that enhance minority health and health disparities research activities; and training scientists who are members of health disparity populations in the behavioral and biomedical sciences.

Loan Repayment Programs: To effectively promote a strong and diverse scientific workforce, the NCMHD invites qualified health professionals to participate in loan repayment programs, which seek to alleviate the financial barriers that so often discourage many talented health professionals from health disparity and medically underserved communities from pursuing a research career. To address this problem, the NCMHD has established two loan repayment programs. The Health Disparities Research Loan Repayment Program (HDR) supports the recruitment and retention of highly qualified health professionals to conduct biomedical, clinical, behavioral, community-based, and health services research addressing minority health or other health disparity issues. This cadre of scientists enables the NCMHD and the NIH to engage in and to promote the development of research programs that reflect the variety of health issues and problems affecting health disparity populations. The Extramural Clinical Research Loan Repayment Program for Individuals from Disadvantaged Backgrounds (ECR) helps to recruit and retain highly qualified health professionals from disadvantaged backgrounds to conduct clinical research. This nucleus of clinical investigators has the potential to improve medical care within their respective communities by promoting clinical programs that address the health problems associated with these communities.

Appropriations History

(\$ in thousands)

FY 2001	\$130,096 (N/A)
FY 2002	\$157,564 (+21.1%)
FY 2003	\$185,714 (+17.9%)
FY 2004	\$191,471 (+3.1%)
FY 2005	\$196,159 (+2.4%)

Extramural Research Project Grants

(Includes SBIR/STTRs)

FY 2001	16
FY 2002	10
FY 2003	21
FY 2004	5
FY 2005	6

Research Training Positions Supported

FY 2001	2
FY 2002	0
FY 2003	0
FY 2004	1
FY 2005	3

Research Centers

FY 2001	1
FY 2002	28
FY 2003	55
FY 2004	62
FY 2005	68