PANCREATIC CANCER RESEARCH PROGRAM

CDMRP
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
CONGRESSIONALLY DIRECTED MEDICAL RESEARCH PROGRAMS

MISSION: Promote rigorous, innovative, high-impact research that leads to earlier pancreatic cancer diagnosis, new therapeutic tools and improved outcomes.

Congressional Appropriations FY20-FY24:

$66M total

"As the first federal research program completely dedicated to pancreatic cancer, the ability to evaluate research priorities each year provides timely support for gap-filling, innovative projects with significant potential to improve and extend the lives of patients. Scientists and patient advocates working side-by-side on the yearly evaluations only strengthens the potential for high-impact advances."

Lynn Matrisian,
Pancreatic Cancer Action Network,
FY20-FY24 Programmatic Panel Member

SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM

3rd leading cause of cancer deaths in the U.S.

- Estimated diagnoses in 2024 – **66,440**[1]
- Estimated deaths in 2024 – **51,750**[1]

Difficult to detect and diagnose

- Approximately **50%** of patients are diagnosed at **stage IV**.
- Average **age** at time of diagnosis is **70** years old.

RELEVANCE TO MILITARY HEALTH

From 2013-2022, approximately **4,400** pancreatic cancer patients per year sought care within the Military Health System.[3]

Medical Encounters	Hospital Bed Days
504,881	139,409

Beneficiaries of active-duty and reserve military members accounted for over 90% of these encounters.

PROGRAM PRIORITIES

- Biomarkers
- Barriers to the implementation of health care
- Early detection research
- Identification and characterization of pancreatic cancer risk
- New drug development
- Supportive care interventions
- Understanding metabolic disruptions
- Understanding tumor development and progression
- Understanding the tumor microenvironment and drug resistance

[1]American Cancer Society. Facts & Figures 2024. Atlanta: American Cancer Society; 2024.
[2]NCI Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results Program https://seer.cancer.gov/statfacts/html/pancreas.html
[3]MHS data from the Defense Medical Surveillance System, The Armed Forces Health Surveillance Division, Defense Health Agency, 2013-2022.

For more information, visit: https://cdmrp.health.mil/pcarp

PROGRAM IMPACT AND OUTCOMES

Filling Gaps to Drive New and Innovative Clinical Trials

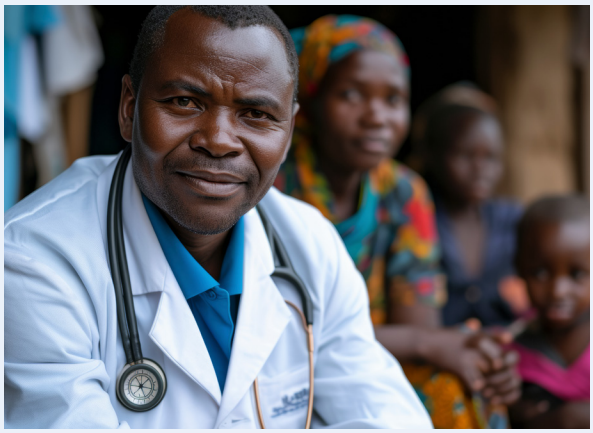
- The **STRONG intervention** provides self-management for tracking nutrition to prevent malnutrition and improve quality of life following pancreatectomy surgery
- A pilot clinical trial to assess a **telehealth approach** that integrates palliative care techniques for improving self-efficacy of symptom management for patients and their full-time caregivers
- Re-purposing artemisinin, an anti-malaria drug, as a chemotherapeutic agent with **less toxicity** than currently available therapies

Facilitating Multidisciplinary Approaches to Research

- Identifying metabolites and lipids from blood samples collected as part of the **NIH-sponsored Women's Health Initiative** which, in combination with known risk factors, may allow for earlier detection of disease
- Combining **genetic analyses, imaging techniques, and metabolomics** to understand differences in disease characteristics and identify unique treatment targets for African American patients

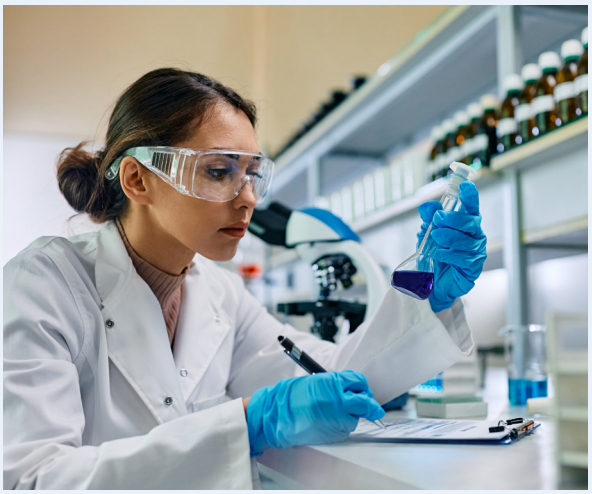
Expanding Expertise by Bridging Diverse Scientific Fields

- Improving screening methods for risk prediction models by incorporating artificial intelligence in analysis of a nationwide data set
- Combining healthcare providers, researchers and community outreach efforts to improve access to healthcare and clinical research participation for Tribal nations



Recruiting and Retaining Young Investigators

- Early-career investigator options partner young investigators with established researchers to **provide critical mentorship** while pursuing innovative, high-risk/high-reward research
  - 30% of PCARP-supported current projects include an early-career investigator



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