

AUTISM RESEARCH PROGRAM



CDMRP
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
CONGRESSIONALLY DIRECTED
MEDICAL RESEARCH PROGRAMS

MISSION: Promote innovative research that advances the understanding of autism spectrum disorder and leads to improved outcomes

Congressional Appropriations

FY07-FY24:

\$164.4M total



“As a parent, I find the ARP valuable because it not only involves parents and their input, but the fusion of the scientific community and ASD families.”

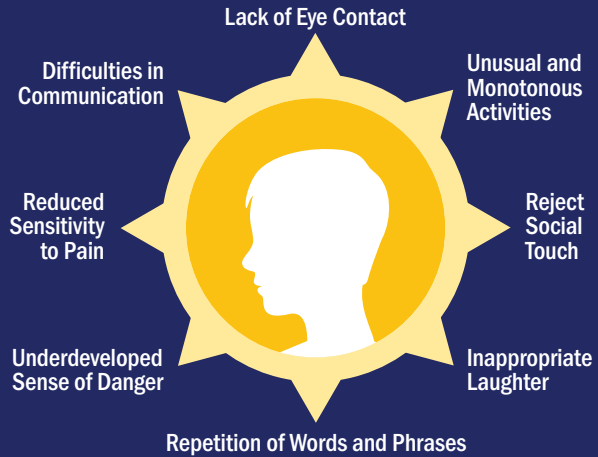
Juan Dipini, *Autism Speaks*,
FY22 Consumer Peer Reviewer

SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM

1 in 36 children are diagnosed with ASD¹

Over 2% of adults are estimated to have ASD²

Symptoms of Autism



RELEVANCE TO MILITARY HEALTH

From 2013-2022, about **28,000** autistic individuals sought care within the Military Health System per year. Beneficiaries of active duty and reserve military members accounted for over **70%** of these encounters.³



- Outpatient encounters: **8M⁺**
- Hospital bed days: **317,913**

PROGRAM PRIORITIES

Improve the lives of individuals with ASD **now** and in their **future**

- Advance effective treatments and interventions for autism
- Support those caring for the autism community
- Address needs of persons with autism into adulthood
- Understanding causes, mechanisms and signs of ASD

¹ Maenner MJ, et al. *MMWR Surveillance Summaries* 72, no. SS-2, 2023: 1-14.

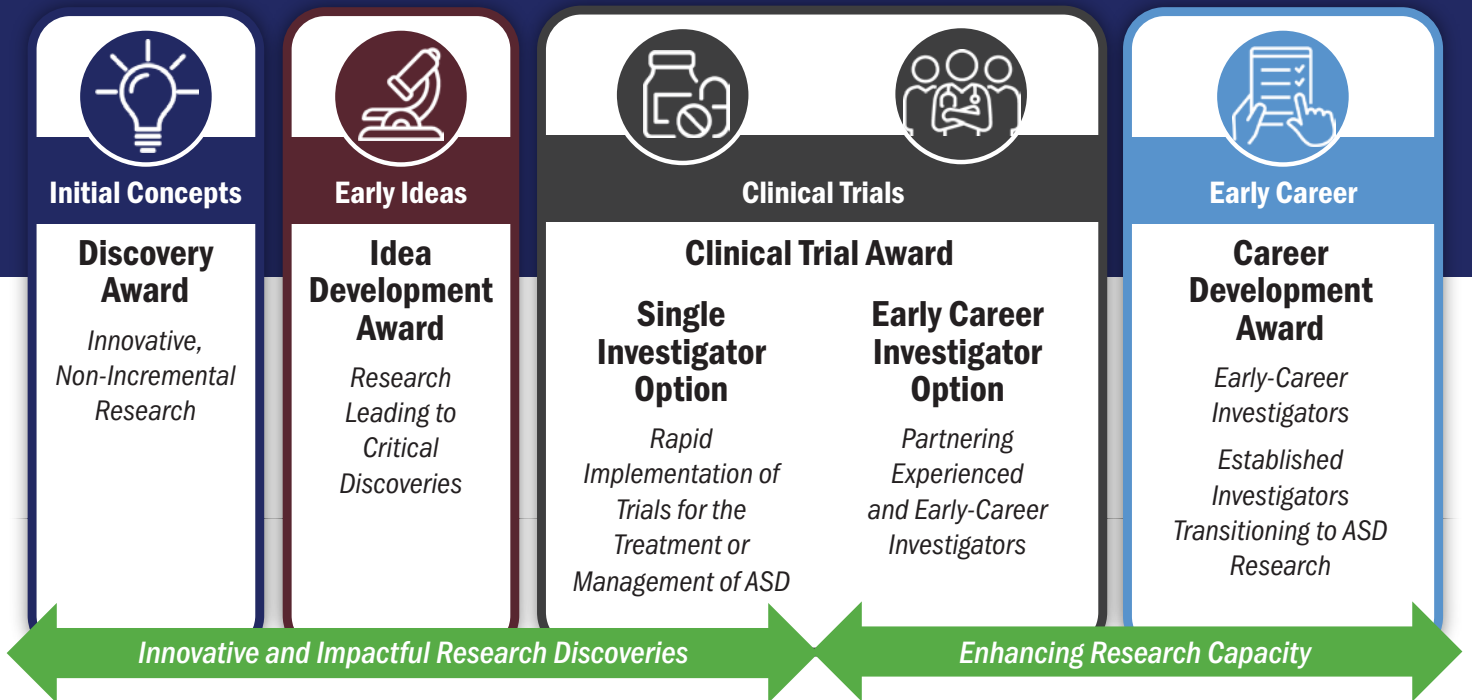
² Dietz PM, et al. *J Autism Dev Disord* 50, no. 12, 2020: 4258-4266.

³ MHS data from the Defense Medical Surveillance System, The Armed Forces Health Surveillance Branch, Defense Health Agency, Silver Spring, Maryland, 2013-2022.



For more information, visit: <https://cdmrp.health.mil/arp/>

PROGRAM IMPACT AND OUTCOMES



Supporting Engagement with the Autism Community

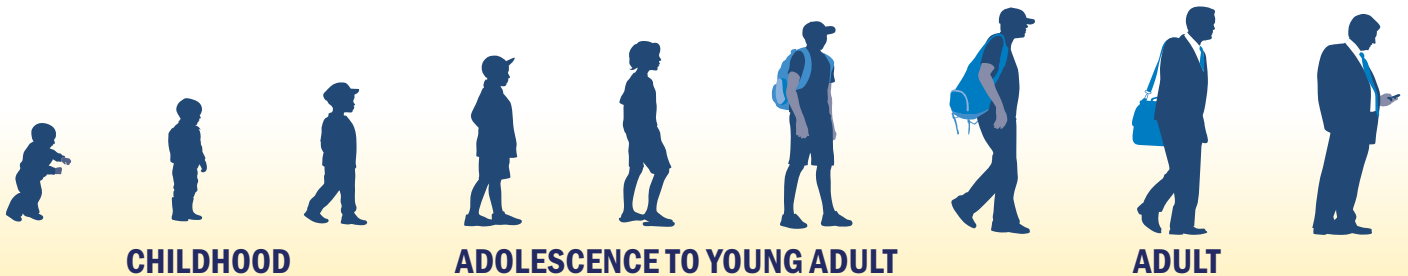
Fostering collaboration between the ARP, researchers, and autistic individuals and caregivers to maximize the impact potential of supported research



- Autistic individuals and caregivers share unique perspectives as part of their role on the ARP Programmatic Panel.
- The ARP encourages community-based and participatory research interventions that include autistic individuals in the development and implementation of these studies.

RESEARCH BREAKTHROUGHS — MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Improving outcomes for those with ASD throughout their life span



- Use of a beta-blocker, propranolol, to **improve core symptoms** of autism in children
- Multidisciplinary intervention for encopresis to **alleviate incontinence** in children
- Augmented and virtual reality software technology to **improve the symptoms of social interaction disorders** seen in autism
- **Job internship and support program** for military dependents in high school
- Use of microbiota transfer therapy to **alleviate gastrointestinal problems** in adults
- Cognitive Enhancement Therapy to **improve employability** in adults

Point of Contact: CDMRP Public Affairs

usarmy.detrick.medcom-cdmrp.mbx.cdmrp-public-affairs@health.mil