



NATIONAL CENTER FOR  
RESEARCH RESOURCES  
NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
AND HUMAN SERVICES

# Clinical Research Career Development

Clinical Research Career Development programs of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) help maintain our nation's cadre of biomedical researchers. These grant programs are designed to attract talented medical students, physicians, dentists, and similar professionals to the challenges of clinical research or to help clinical investigators transition to independent research careers.

**The National Center for Research Resources ensures that essential tools and research resources are readily available to NIH-supported investigators nationwide. NCCR-supported resources—a comprehensive range of human, animal, technology, and more—enable biomedical research advances.**

The Division for Clinical Research Resources of the National Center for Research Resources (NCCR), a part of the NIH, participates in several career development programs that provide grants to institutions or individuals, as described below. To determine if a program is appropriate to an institution's career development goals or a potential candidate's career aspirations, refer to the more detailed program information available on the NCCR Web site, as outlined on the last page of this fact sheet. In addition to the career opportunities described here, NCCR also participates in the NIH Loan Repayment Program (LRP) that seeks to retain an adequate national pool of health professionals who are trained to be independent clinical investigators. Additional information about the program can be found at [www.lrp.nih.gov/](http://www.lrp.nih.gov/).

## **(K12) Mentored Clinical Research Scholar (CRS) Award**

This award provides support to institutions to establish career development programs for physicians and dentists so they may develop the research skills necessary to become independent, clinical/patient-oriented\* investigators. The program must include activities that provide candidates with a comprehensive understanding of clinical research approaches that are fundamental and not necessarily disease-specific.



The lead mentor, who works closely with the candidate to develop a tailored career development plan, should be an established clinical researcher who holds a faculty position. Candidates for the program are selected from among recently trained physicians and dentists. If an institution hosts an NCCR-supported General Clinical Research Center (GCRC), then the GCRC resources should be utilized to facilitate the program. An institutional program director and an advisory committee should oversee the integrated, didactic, and mentored CRS award program. Funds provided by this award may be used to support full or partial completion of an advanced degree such as an M.S. or Ph.D. in clinical investigation or an M.P.H. The maximum duration of support for a candidate cannot exceed five years. Candidates selected for a CRS award may be eligible to apply to the NIH LRP for clinical investigators. (See information above.)

The CRS award is a pilot program for NCCR and, therefore, will be evaluated in several years for possible expansion.

### **(K23) Mentored Patient-Oriented Research Career Development Award**

This award provides support to investigators who are committed to clinical/patient-oriented\* research, so they may further develop their clinical research careers. The three to five years of supervised study and research supported by the K23 award provide clinically trained professionals

with an opportunity to develop independent research skills and to gain experience in advanced methods and experimental approaches needed to carry out patient-oriented research. To be eligible for an NCCR-supported K23 award, a candidate must have:

- an M.D., D.D.S., or equivalent;
- an academic appointment at an institution that hosts a GCRC;
- the approval of the GCRC Program Director to use GCRC resources to accomplish the research goals outlined in the application; and
- a mentor who is an active GCRC-based investigator.

### **Change in NIH Policy: Concurrent Support from a Career Development Award and a Research Grant**

In late 2003, NIH modified its policy on mentored career development awards to allow award recipients to hold concurrent salary support from their career development awards (K awards) and a competing research grant when recognized as a Principal Investigator or subproject Director. Thus, mentored career award recipients in the last two years of their support period will be permitted to reduce the level of effort required for the career award and replace that effort with an NIH research grant or subproject, provided they remain in a mentored situation. This policy permits those candidates who are ready to apply for and receive NIH research support to continue to benefit from



the period of protected time offered by the career development award. Additional information can be found at <http://grants2.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-04-007.html>.

### **(K24) Midcareer Investigator Award in Patient-Oriented Research**

This award provides support to clinicians to allow them protected time to:

- devote to clinical/patient-oriented\* research;
- enhance their clinical research skills in order to conduct meritorious patient-oriented research; and
- mentor beginning clinical investigators.

Target candidates are outstanding clinical scientists who are engaged in patient-oriented research, are within 15 years of their specialty training, can demonstrate the need for a period of intensively focused research as a means of enhancing their clinical research careers, and are committed to mentoring. An investigator who is applying to NCRN's K24 program and is at an institution that hosts a GCRC must use the GCRC resources and must include with the grant application a letter of commitment from the GCRC Program Director or the Principal Investigator.

### **Mentored Medical Student Clinical Research Program**

NCRN supports a large network of GCRCs located throughout the country but primarily at academic medical institutions. NCRN provides supplemental funding to GCRCs to establish institutional programs that will introduce medical students to potential careers in clinical research. The GCRCs are the focal point of this award program because they provide the necessary infrastructure and environment to expose medical students to both didactic training and the clinical practice of patient research. Medical students who are interested in this program are encouraged to directly contact a GCRC Program Director listed in the *Clinical Research Resources Directory*, available on NCRN's Web site at [www.ncrr.nih.gov/ncrrprog/clindir/crdirectory.asp](http://www.ncrr.nih.gov/ncrrprog/clindir/crdirectory.asp).

\* The definition of clinical/patient-oriented research as adopted by NIH in 1997: [www.nih.gov/news/crp/97report/execsum.htm](http://www.nih.gov/news/crp/97report/execsum.htm)



### Detailed Information on NCRR's Web site

The NCRR Web site at [www.ncrr.nih.gov](http://www.ncrr.nih.gov) provides access to the NCRR *Clinical Research Resources Directory* for GCRC information and to other relevant reference materials as follows:

#### K23 Award

- Program Announcement (PA-00-004)
- *Notice: Eligibility and Assignment of K23 Applications to NCRR*
- *Guidelines for Clinical Research Resources Programs, Supplement II*

#### K24 Award

- Program Announcement (PA-00-005)
- *Guidelines for Clinical Research Resources Programs*

#### Mentored Medical Student Clinical Research Program

- *Guidelines for Clinical Research Resources Programs* (“Medical/Dental students” in the GCRC section)



#### For further information, contact:

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#### For general NCRR information:

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