

A December 2004 State-of-the-Science conference laid out several critical research needs. It also highlighted the interactions among patients, caregivers, and the health system, and their effects on outcomes. A statement from that meeting can be found at: <http://consensus.nih.gov/2004/2004EndOfLifeCareSOS024html.htm>. During the next few years, NINR will support efforts to:

- ◆ Identify factors that influence, and develop strategies to improve, decision-making and treatment strategies at the end of life.
- ◆ Validate instruments and refine methodologies to address the complex issues and unique features of end-of-life research for application in diverse groups and settings.
- ◆ Develop interventions to improve palliative care and enhance quality of life for the dying patient and to support family and informal caregivers.
- ◆ Explain factors related to the end of life among underserved groups, including those who are vulnerable and unable to express their preferences near the end of life.
- ◆ Support the development of informatics tools that will facilitate the integration and analysis of data from end-of-life studies.
- ◆ Increase efforts to expand end-of-life research, through research training, interdisciplinary programs, supplemental awards, small grants, and centers or center components.

ONGOING RESEARCH INTERESTS

NINR has a continuing interest in maintaining a balanced research portfolio that reflects investigator-initiated ideas, unexpected opportunities, and attention to understudied topics. In addition, the Institute collaborates on a regular basis with other NIH entities with related research interests. Applicants and research deans should consult the NINR website at <http://ninr.nih.gov/ninr/> for current information on research and research training programs. The website also provides contact information for NINR program directors.