

CONSUMER INCLUSION IN BREAST CANCER SCIENTIFIC PEER REVIEW PANELS

S. Young-McCaughan¹, M. Alciati², L. Amende³, I. Bisceglia⁴, E.S. Breslau³, B. Terry-Koroma¹, A. Valadez⁵, Y. Andejski¹. ¹United States Army Medical Research and Materiel Command (USAMRMC) Breast Cancer Research Program (BCRP), ²Management Solutions for Health, Inc., ³United Information Systems, Inc., ⁴Science Applications International Corporation, ⁵Academy Associates, Inc.

Goal of the BCRP: Eradicate Breast Cancer

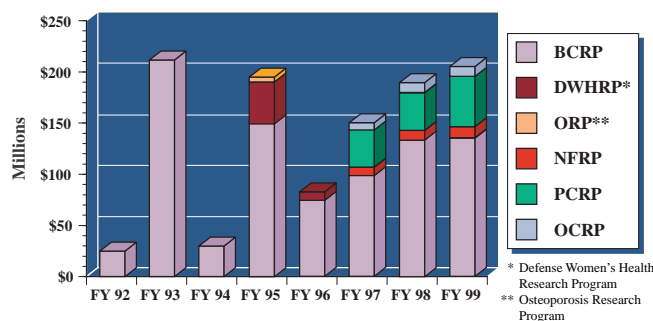
The Breast Cancer Research Program (BCRP) is a partnership of consumer advocates, clinicians, and scientists collaborating with the DoD to identify gaps in research, design new mechanisms for supporting research, and guide the funding process.

BACKGROUND

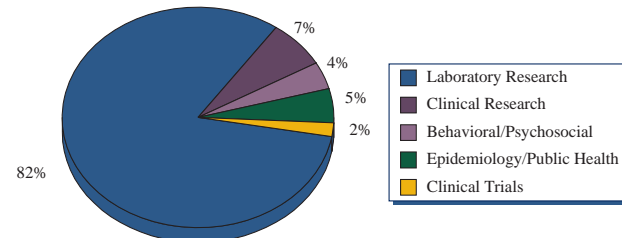
CDMRP Program Philosophy

- Expedite and facilitate breakthroughs in research
- Support innovative, risk-taking research

CDMRP Funding History



FY98 BCRP Funded Research Areas



Program Highlights

- Consumer Participation
- Congressionally Directed
- Two-Tiered Review
- Flexible Science Management Model

INTRODUCTION



Goals and Objectives of the Consumer Program

Primary Goal is to provide an opportunity for consumers and scientists to work together on scientific peer review panels.

Core Program Objective is to ensure that the entire process is fair and impartial by:

- recruiting a broad representation of consumers,
- treating all participants equally,
- orienting all participants to the process,
- educating all participants about their roles, and
- evaluating the peer review process.

Definition of Consumer

Breast cancer survivor nominated by and representing a breast cancer related group.

Consumer Recruitment

- Consumers recruited to serve on basic, clinical, and behavioral science panels and tasked to review scientifically detailed proposals.
- Nominations solicited from grass roots breast cancer organizations nationwide. No self-nominations.
- Nominees submit a résumé and a personal statement describing education and involvement in breast cancer.
- Consumers recruited from various age, geographic, educational, and cultural backgrounds.

Consumer Selection

- Formal evaluation of applications.
- Brief telephone contact to ascertain willingness to serve.
- Selection based on rank order of initial screening scores.
- Assignment to panels, one mentor (previous participant in the DOD scientific peer review) and one novice.
- Consumers serve as lay representatives.

PURPOSE

- Examine the impact of consumer reviewer inclusion in BCRP scientific peer review processes
- Describe changes associated with participation of consumer reviewers over time



METHODOLOGY

- Convenience sample of scientist and consumer reviewers
- Pre/post-panel questionnaire design
- Responses matched intra-year (pre vs. post), but not across years
- Subset of 7 questions combined to form a "Consumer Benefit Scale (CBS)" score
 - Five questions scored dichotomously
 - Two questions scored dichotomously in 1995 and by five-point Likert scale in 1996 and 1997
 - High Cronbach Alphas allowed for a total CBS score to be calculated
- Response rates

Year	Participants	Matched Questionnaires	Response Rate
95	646	393	60.8%
96	843	563	66.8%
97	652	431	66.1%

Demographic Characteristics of Panel Participants

Characteristic		Consumers	Scientists	Total
Sample Size	N	202	1,182	1,384
Age*	M	51.2 ± 8.6	46.5 ± 8.2	47.2 ± 8.4
Female	%	100.0	34.4	44.0
Racial Minority	%	15.6	18.3	17.9

* p < .0005

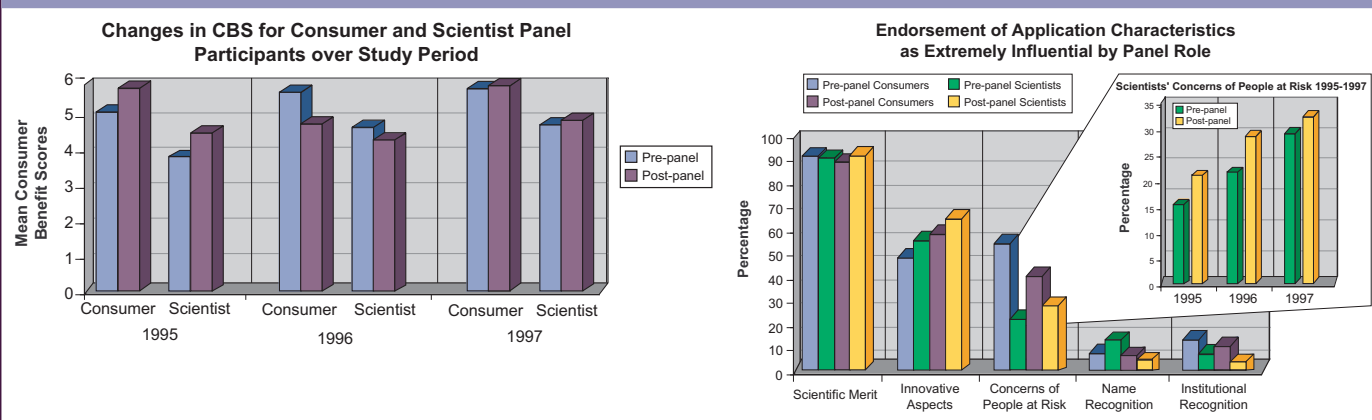
CONSUMER BENEFIT SCALE

- Will consumers add an important perspective?
- Will consumers affect overall scoring?
- Will the process take more time than necessary?
- Will consumers influence other panel members?
- Will consumers make irrelevant comments?
- Will there be benefits to having consumer reviewers?
- Will there be drawbacks to having consumer reviewers?

STUDY CONSIDERATIONS

- Changes in programmatic emphases from 1995-1997
- Mentorship program resulted in repeated study participants in 1996 and 1997
- Possible Hawthorne Effects
- Limitations of study design and Consumer Benefit Scale

RESULTS



CONCLUSIONS

- Key application characteristics influenced consumers in similar proportions to scientists in their overall assessment of the scientific/merit of research proposals
- Both scientists and consumers were more supportive of consumer involvement in scientific peer review after participation in review panels
- These findings support the continued involvement of consumers in scientific peer review
- This program's success has encouraged the larger scientific community, both funding agencies and researchers, to develop similar initiatives