

## **Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs Program Evaluation Steering Committee Charter**

### **Introduction:**

In a 1997 report, the Institute of Medicine (IOM) recommended that CDMRP establish a mechanism to measure and evaluate progress toward program goals, both annually and over time.<sup>1</sup> The importance of a robust program evaluation process is also emphasized in the 1999 report from the IOM, entitled “Evaluating Federal Research Programs.”<sup>2</sup> In response, the CDMRP has established a comprehensive and strategic approach to program evaluation including: a) development of a process for identifying, reviewing and administering evaluation studies, b) periodic re-assessment of priorities, and c) sustained commitment to accountability and program improvement.

Evaluation of the strategies used by various CDMRP-managed research programs to support and stimulate specific types and areas of research, as well as communication of the outcomes from that research, are needed to maximize the return on our national research investment and to speed progress toward meaningful improvements in health outcomes.

### **CDMRP Program Evaluation**

The primary goals of Program Evaluation are to study program outcomes to assess the extent to which the CDMRP has contributed to advances in disease prevention, diagnosis, treatment, health care quality and patient quality of life, and to assess whether we are advancing science management and thereby making an impact on the broader scientific community. The results of the evaluation efforts are then provided to the CDMRP leadership and program staff, and may be disseminated to the public, thus finding an audience within CDMRP as well as outside the organization.

#### *Key Components of the CDMRP Evaluation Program*

The CDMRP has developed a model for the evaluation of its managed research programs that goes beyond descriptive data to tackle the difficult issues of assessing research relevance, productivity and accomplishments with respect to established program goals. The CDMRP evaluation process includes four key components: (1) establishment of a Program Evaluation Steering Committee (PESC); (2) development of evaluation project goals and objectives; (3) formation of ad hoc project evaluation teams and (4) reporting the findings and recommendations of the project teams. Each of these components is described below.

- a. The Program Evaluation Steering Committee (PESC) is comprised of members from different divisions within CDMRP, including business operations, program management, grants management and leadership (see membership list in Appendix 1; also available on the shared network drive at : M:\Program Evaluation). This committee assesses and prioritizes potential evaluation studies and provides guidance to the project teams that execute these studies. It is intended that the PESC leverage the experiences, expertise, and insight of key individuals. PESC members do not need to be directly responsible for

managing project activities (although they can be if desired), but are expected to provide support and guidance for those who do. Thus, individually, PESC members should:

- Be active participants in the evaluation processes and initiatives being pursued;
- Identify the significance of the project for major stakeholders;
- Understand the strategic implications and outcomes of initiatives being pursued;
- Have a broad understanding of project management issues and program evaluation procedures;
- Review the status of ongoing projects;
- Ensure that each project's outputs meet the requirements of the CDMRP and key stakeholders;
- Be active participants in establishing priorities and resources;
- Provide guidance to the project team and users of the project's outputs;
- Consider ideas and issues raised;
- Ensure the projects remain consistent with the original intent and are moving toward completion.

*b. Meeting structure* - Meetings for Program Evaluation are held once a month. The meetings include the PESC as well as any interested members of the CDMRP team. CDMRP support contractors are encouraged to have at least one representative at the monthly meeting. The chair of the committee will develop the agenda and have it distributed to the committee members before the meeting. The minutes of the previous meeting will be reviewed by the chair, and also distributed to the PESC for comment before the next meeting. All agenda items, including minutes from monthly meeting are available on a shared CDMRP network drive at : M:\Program Evaluation.

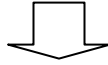
The PESC will meet, as necessary, in closed sessions, to conduct committee specific business.

*c. Development of Projects* – The projects that are conducted through the Program Evaluation process generally reach across programs and divisions within CDMRP, or across collaborative organizations, e.g. USAMRAA and CDMRP. It is important to note that projects are also conducted by individual program teams or within specific divisions such as Grants Management or Program Management. These projects do not need to be presented to the Program Evaluation group, however, upon completion and, if appropriate, the report can be archived with the Program Evaluation final reports on the shared network drive. While reporting these projects to the Program Evaluation Committee is not required, it is encouraged, as these reports may stimulate consideration of projects that cross multiple programs experiencing similar issues.

Projects can be of many different types, such as those that evaluate goals, processes or outcomes .<sup>3</sup> Any CDMRP employee, including contractors, may propose an evaluation project. Project proposals will be presented to the Program Evaluation group for discussion. The steering committee will determine if the proposal will be presented to the CDMRP Director for approval. If approved, the steering committee will establish the project goals and objectives. Developing a

proposal serves two purposes, (1) it clarifies the intent of the project and (2) it helps organize the evaluation project so that time and resources can be allocated.

Potential project presented at the Program Evaluation meeting



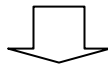
Discuss project and merit



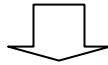
Develop Project Nomination



PESC provides a recommendation



Refer the project to a specific IPT –or– Establish a Program Eval Project Team



Present PESC recommendation to CDMRP Director for approval

A proposal should be prepared using the proposal template which was approved by the PESC on 3 December 2009, available on the shared network drive (see Appendix 2).

The proposal will be orally presented to the Program Evaluation group during one of the regularly scheduled meetings. The Program Evaluation group will consider its merits and provide recommendations. The PESC will vote to recommend approval or disapproval of the project during a closed session. Those proposals recommended, by majority vote, for approval will be presented to the CDMRP Director for final approval. If the proposal is approved, the PESC will establish the project’s overarching goals and objectives, establish a working group and appoint a team leader. The PESC will maintain a record of all proposed projects, approved or disapproved, and be prepared to present a full report to the CDMRP Director for review upon request.

d. *Formation of Ad Hoc Project Evaluation Teams* – For each evaluation project, an ad hoc Project Evaluation Team will be formed to address the specific requirements of each project and develop the project’s plan of execution. The Project Evaluation Team will receive guidance from the PESC, which will include the project goals and objectives. Project Evaluation Teams will be comprised of CDMRP staff and contractor support as necessary. Some projects may also utilize consultants with specific expertise. Team members will be selected from volunteers and by invitation, to ensure that the appropriate areas of expertise are represented. A team leader will be appointed by the PESC.

*e. Project Completion* – When a project is completed, a final summary will be prepared and presented to the Program Evaluation group. A final report from the project consists of a brief (5-10 minute) oral presentation to the Program Evaluation Committee, and a written report in the basic format of a scientific publication. The format for a written report was approved by the PESC on 3 December 2009 and is available on the shared network drive (see Appendix 3).

An archive of all completed projects conducted by the Program Evaluation Committee is maintained on the shared network drive (M:\Program Evaluation). This archive includes all minutes of previous meetings, agendas, report schedules, project lists, project proposals, and final reports.

## Bibliography

- 1) A Review of the Department of Defense's Program for Breast Cancer Research. Institute of Medicine. National Academy Press. 1997
- 2) Evaluating Federal Research Programs. Research and the Government Performance and Results Act. Institute of Medicine. National Academy Press. 1999
- 3) Basic Guide to Program Evaluation. Carter McNamara, Copyright 1997-2008.  
[http://managementhelp.org/evaluatn/fnl\\_eval.htm](http://managementhelp.org/evaluatn/fnl_eval.htm)

Charter accepted by:

Date of acceptance:

Attachments:

Appendix 1: Current membership of the PESC

Appendix 2: Project nomination template

Appendix 3: Project report guidelines