



**Reimagining Innovations in Healthcare:
A Request for Proposals**

RELEASE DATE: September 13, 2022
Questions from Applicants due September 22, 2022 at 12:00 p.m. EST
Proposals due by October 27, 2022 at 11:59 p.m. EST

National Association of Chain Drug Stores Foundation
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Reimagining Innovations in Healthcare: Request for Proposals

Purpose and Need

The NACDS Foundation's purpose is to **improve the health and wellbeing of communities** in America by sustainably supporting groundbreaking research and other programs that enhance health outcomes, foster equity, strengthen access to care, and advance public health. The **NACDS Foundation's Guiding Principles** include an approach that is **community-focused** (we support leaders and researchers that prioritize the needs and experiences of all communities), **transformational** (we anticipate communities' health and wellbeing needs and support the development of innovative, scalable solutions), and **agile** (we promote continuous learning and adaptation), plus the Foundation serves as an **amplifier** (we spur translation and adoption of promising and proven patient care models).

Overall, health status in the United States (US) is lower compared with other developed nations¹, with some population groups faring worse across a broad range of measures related to health and health care.² The NACDS Foundation seeks to support important and innovative projects that explore solutions to several of the most pressing public health problems facing diverse and underserved communities in the US, in alignment with the NACDS Foundation's Purpose and Guiding Principles stated above.

Project Objective

This Request for Proposals aims to solicit efforts to enhance health, foster equity, strengthen access to care, and advance public health. In particular, the focus of this solicitation is to initiate projects that improve inequities and increase access to care for underserved or otherwise vulnerable populations to improve population health.

Scope of Work

Applicants should target their research to address one of the priority health concerns (outlined under Research Topics) with a consideration for inequities in health outcomes or access to affordable care. Research should consider the social determinants of health (SDOH).³ SDOH are the conditions in the environments where people live that affect a wide range of health,

¹ Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Health at a Glance 2021: OECD Indicators. Accessed August 19, 2022. Available at: <https://www.oecd.org/health/health-at-a-glance.htm>.

² Kaiser Family Foundation. Key Facts on Health and Health Care by Race and Ethnicity. Jan 26, 2022 Accessed August 19, 2022. Available at: <https://www.kff.org/racial-equity-and-health-policy/report/key-facts-on-health-and-health-care-by-race-and-ethnicity/>

³ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Health.gov. Social Determinants of Health. Accessed August 19, 2022. Available at: <https://health.gov/healthypeople/priority-areas/social-determinants-health>

functioning, and quality-of-life outcomes and risks. A major SDOH component is access to affordable and quality healthcare. People who cannot get the care they need may have more preventable complications, hospitalizations, emotional stress, and higher costs.

Unfortunately, access to healthcare has worsened over time, especially during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The US Healthy People 2030 health goals includes the following objective: “Reduce the proportion of persons who are unable to obtain or delayed in obtaining necessary medical care.”⁴ The NACDS Foundation supports research that will provide approaches and insights to address pressing health problems and offers strategies to meet this goal.

In addition to access to healthcare, access to nutritious food is another important SDOH. The NACDS Foundation supports the CDC Foundation’s efforts to end hunger and increase healthy eating and physical activity across the US by 2030. The CDC Foundation is working to identify cross-sector partners interested in making commitments of engagement to drive forward broad health and wellness research.⁵ It is our understanding that independent, objective research efforts that explore implementation of innovative health and wellness concepts to address the prevention and management of diet-related diseases in various settings, including community pharmacies and retail health settings, could align with the CDC Foundation’s intent to drive transformative change and address the public health issues of hunger, nutrition, and health.

Alignment of research proposals with the NACDS Foundation’s Purpose

The NACDS Foundation is recognized as a 501(c)(3) charitable and educational organization by the IRS, and as such, must maintain certain standards in research, as well as separation from the NACDS trade association’s goals and advocacy. All aspects of research supported by the NACDS Foundation and any associated research publications should be consistent with the NACDS Foundation’s charitable purpose of improving the health and wellness of people in America through innovative research, among other initiatives.

Scalability and replicability concerns, as well as an assessment of barriers to implementation, may warrant a general financial analysis of patient care services. However, research purposes and aims **should not address business or marketing issues**. Prohibited aspects of research include, but are not limited to, the profitability of providing certain pharmacy or healthcare services, the pricing of pharmacy services, business or marketing strategies, or any market research regarding demand for, or satisfaction with, certain pharmacy services.

⁴ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Health.gov. Health Care Access and Quality. Accessed August 19, 2022. Available at: <https://health.gov/healthypeople/objectives-and-data/browse-objectives/health-care-access-and-quality>

⁵ CDC Foundation. Accessed September 5, 2022. Available at: <https://www.cdcfoundation.org/hunger-and-health>

Likewise, **NACDS Foundation funded research cannot support analysis or advocacy regarding pharmacy regulatory or business issues**, such as advocating for expanded pharmacy services under scope of practice laws or promoting regulatory or marketplace recognition of pharmacists as healthcare providers. Although specific patient outcomes may be measured and reported on, as can reduction in healthcare costs to the broader public health system or the patient, NACDS Foundation cannot and does not fund research with the goal to promote pharmacy services or the pharmacy profession.

Additionally, applicants will be required to submit plans to disseminate their research findings in a peer-reviewed journal article or other publications. The NACDS Foundation works collaboratively with research partners to prepare communications regarding funded projects for publication. The NACDS Foundation asks that researchers always keep in mind that ***NACDS Foundation research focuses solely on public health and patient care, not the promotion of the pharmacy industry or profession. The mission, vision, and purpose of the NACDS Foundation is separate and distinct from that of NACDS.*** As a public charity, the NACDS Foundation's research must be independent and objective, and must focus on improving patient care and advancing public health; research findings must not be intended to promote the pharmacy industry nor profession.

Research Methods: Applicants must specify using either a prospective or retrospective approach. Quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-methods approaches are acceptable. Replication of previous studies is discouraged. Instead, novel approaches or significant improvements in prior methodologies will be considered for funding.

Applicants can choose one option:

- **OPTION A: Prospective Research**

These projects will enroll patients, collect data, and study the effects of an intervention over time/at the end of a specified time period. The expected project timeline is 1-2 years for the research efforts and up to an additional year for preparing a summary report and a journal article/publication, for a total of ~2-3 project years.

- **OPTION B: Retrospective/Secondary analyses**

These projects will analyze data that have already been collected, therefore it is expected that the project will have a shorter timeline of ~1-2 years to complete the work, including a final summary report and a journal article/publication.

Research Topics: The NACDS Foundation is soliciting research proposals that address **at least one** of the following health issues:

- **Enhancing Access to Mental Health Screening and Support**

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a clear effect on declining mental health across most U.S. populations. Emergency rooms throughout the country saw an increase in mental-health-related visits directly following surges in virus circulation.⁶ Young adults and minority populations made up a disproportionate number of these visits, creating a need for programmatic strategies tailored to the individual mental healthcare needs of underserved populations in the United States. In early 2022, roughly one-third of American adults reported symptoms of depression or anxiety and 27% of them reported that their mental healthcare needs were unmet.⁷ The ongoing pandemic has deepened these disparities, catalyzing an increase in substance use, mental distress, and drug overdose while also creating more barriers to accessing mental health care. Recent research has shown that depression and anxiety may be associated with higher rates of developing chronic conditions and vice versa.⁸ However, access to screening and mental health services are not available in many communities. Additional barriers to care include a shortage of mental health professionals, social stigma about mental health conditions, and lack of affordability.⁹

Proposals that address this health issue could include strategies to improve access to screening for mental health conditions with linkage to support, resources, and “warm handoff” referrals for services for a specific population group within or across diverse communities.

- **Implementing Innovative Approaches to Chronic Disease Prevention and Management, Including Integration of Evidence-Based Lifestyle Approaches**

Currently, over half of the U.S. adult population has been diagnosed with a chronic disease; over a quarter of adults have multiple chronic conditions.¹⁰ Chronic diseases are currently the leading causes of death and disability in the U.S. and are the main

⁶ Anderson KN, Radhakrishnan L, Lane RI, Sheppard M, DeVies J, et. al. Changes and Inequities in Adult Mental Health-Related Emergency Department Visits During the COVID-19 Pandemic in the US. *JAMA Psychiatry*. 2022 May 1;79(5):475-485.

⁷ Kaiser Family Foundation. How Does use of Mental Health Care Vary by Demographics and Health Insurance Coverage? March 24, 2022. Accessed August 19, 2022. Available at: <https://www.kff.org/health-reform/issue-brief/how-does-use-of-mental-health-care-vary-by-demographics-and-health-insurance-coverage/>

⁸ Bobo, WV et al. Association of Depression and Anxiety with the Accumulation of Chronic Conditions. *Jama Netw Open*. May 2, 2022. Accessed August 19, 2022. Available at: https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2791768?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Issue:%202022-07-14%20PharmaVoice%20%5Bissue:43108%5D&utm_term=PharmaVoice

⁹ Coombs NC, Meriwether WE, Caringi J, Newcomer SR. Barriers to healthcare access among U.S. adults with mental health challenges: A population-based study. *SSM Popul Health*. 2021;15:100847.

¹⁰ Boersma P, Black LI, Ward BW. Prevalence of Multiple Chronic Conditions Among US Adults, 2018. *Prev Chronic Dis* 2020;17:200130.

drivers of the nation's \$4.1 trillion in annual healthcare costs.¹¹ Although numerous research studies have shown some successful community and pharmacy-based chronic care prevention strategies and management programs, these conditions continue to contribute to high rates of disability, morbidity, and mortality and are costly for individuals, public health programs, and society.¹² The uptake of preventive services and access to care in some communities, especially in disadvantaged and rural areas, may be limited¹³, thus there is a need for increased community outreach and education, improved referral systems, and expanded screenings.¹⁴ Since chronic disease management often requires daily adherence to lifestyle and typically, pharmacologic management, strategies to educate and support those living with chronic disease and those at-risk of developing chronic disease are critical. Innovative methods, strategies, and programs are needed for prevention and management of the leading causes of death and disability such as heart disease, stroke, cancer, diabetes, obesity, arthritis, and other chronic conditions.

The NACDS Foundation is especially interested in proposals that aim to test novel strategies that can address lifestyle and prevention issues to prevent or reduce the impact of chronic diseases. In particular, the lack of nutritionally adequate food affects millions of US households every year. Adults with food insecurity are disproportionately more likely to report poor health and have a higher rate of most chronic diseases such as diabetes mellitus, hypertension, coronary heart disease, stroke, cancer, asthma, and HIV/ AIDS, compared with those who are food secure, and thus incur more healthcare costs.¹⁵⁻¹⁶ Food security status has been found to be a stronger predictor of chronic illness than income in some cases.¹² Addressing behavior change and lifestyle change of populations with chronic disease or at risk of developing chronic disease also has been demonstrated as an important component to improve health outcomes.¹⁷ The NACDS Foundation will prioritize for review and funding research proposals that address these issues.

¹¹ CDC. Chronic Diseases in America. Accessed August 19, 2022. Available at

<https://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/resources/infographic/chronic-diseases.htm>

¹² Raghupathi W, Raghupathi V. An Empirical Study of Chronic Diseases in the United States: A Visual Analytics Approach. *Int J Environ Res Public Health*. 2018;15(3):431.

¹³ Gallaway, Michael Shayne PhD^{*,†}; Aseret-Manygoats, Teresa MPA^{*}; Tormala, Wayne MSW^{*}. Disparities of Access, Use, and Barriers to Seeking Health Care Services in Arizona. *Medical Care*: February 2022 60:2 ,113-118.

¹⁴ Allen P, Walsh-Bailey C, Hunleth J, Carothers BJ, Brownson RC. Facilitators of Multisector Collaboration for Delivering Cancer Control Interventions in Rural Communities: A Descriptive Qualitative Study. *Prev Chronic Dis* 2022;19:210450.

¹⁵ Nagata, J.M., Palar, K., Gooding, H.C. et al. Food Insecurity and Chronic Disease in US Young Adults: Findings from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent to Adult Health. *J GEN INTERN MED* 34, 2756–2762 (2019)

¹⁶ Christian A. Gregory, Alisha Coleman-Jensen. Food Insecurity, Chronic Disease, and Health Among Working-Age Adults, ERR-235, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, July 2017.

¹⁷ Vodovotz Y, Barnard N, Hu FB, et. al., Prioritized Research for the Prevention, Treatment, and Reversal of Chronic Disease: Recommendations From the Lifestyle Medicine Research Summit. *Front Med (Lausanne)*. 2020 Dec 22;7:585744.

Proposals should aim to implement creative and novel solutions to support improvements in chronic disease prevention and/or management in a specific population group, including the integration of lifestyle approaches (e.g., improving nutrition, food security, and broadly aiming to improve health outcomes through prevention or management of chronic disease). In particular, this request for proposals emphasizes nontraditional methods and strategies that could be sustainably utilized among underserved populations.

- **Preventing and Reducing Impact from Infectious Diseases**

The threat of infectious disease in the world is increasing as there are dramatic changes in society and the environment. Strategies are needed to prevent and better manage infectious diseases in light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the emergence and spread of monkeypox, as well as recent re-emergence of vaccine-preventable diseases such as measles, hepatitis, and polio. There also has been a concerning recent decline in the uptake of routine childhood immunizations as well as a decline among adults in receiving recommended seasonal influenza vaccines and other vaccines, disproportionately affecting underserved populations. Healthy People 2030 states as a key goal: “Reduce rates of infectious diseases and improve health for people with chronic infections.”¹⁸ Additional efforts are also needed to support individuals at risk of infectious diseases, such as HIV and hepatitis C, which are not currently preventable with vaccinations. Recent experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic clearly demonstrate that poverty, inequality, and social determinants of health create conditions for the increased transmission of infectious diseases, and existing health disparities or inequalities can further contribute to unequal burdens of morbidity and mortality.

Proposals could test interventions to promote infectious disease prevention or management strategies. Research could focus on issues such as improving vaccination uptake or access, expanding access to point-of-care testing or other testing and/or treatment services, and improving use of countermeasures including vaccines and antivirals, in addition to providing community education and other protective interventions for a specific population group.

The NACDS Foundation is seeking research proposals that address at least one of the topics outlined above and incorporate all of the following interests:

- **Impact on Health Outcomes:** Projects will explore interventions and potentially produce findings that are likely to have a meaningful impact on individual or community health

¹⁸ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Health.gov. Health Care Access and Quality. Accessed August 19, 2022. Available at: <https://health.gov/healthypeople/objectives-and-data/browse-objectives/infectious-disease>

status or health outcomes.

- **Scalability:** Projects will explore interventions and potentially produce findings that are feasible and applicable to other geographical locations within the US and/or other healthcare settings.
- **Sustainability:** Projects have real-world applicability and may be candidates for adoption within the community-based healthcare ecosystem/public health programs and include a feasible value-based (outcomes-based) care, or other care services sustainability, model that could be leveraged to support patient access to the intervention beyond the research phase.
- **Leveraging technology:** Projects consider interoperability, or ways to efficiently share or communicate data across healthcare/public health entities utilizing current or novel technology to achieve the aims of the effort.
- **Relevance:** The NACDS Foundation is committed to achieving the health promotion and disease prevention objectives of “[Healthy People 2030](#),” a national activity to reduce health disparities and improve the quality of life. Projects that align with objectives related to Healthy People 2030 Health Objectives and projects that align with the CDC Foundation’s public health goals related to hunger, food insecurity, and diet-related disease may be prioritized.¹⁹

Target Populations:

Priority will be given to proposals that include one of these U.S. populations:

- High incidence of preventable health conditions such as high infant mortality, high levels of chronic diseases, or high levels of behavior that puts people at risk for poor health (such as smoking and inadequate or unhealthy food intake)
- High level of poverty or high proportion of the population that is low income, as well as uninsured or under insured populations
- Reduced access to healthcare (e.g., Having no or few providers in the geographic area).

Partnerships: Applicants should include the following partners in their research plan, and provide a rationale for their participation:

1. Community pharmacy(s) **AND**
2. At least one other relevant research partner that may include public or private payors/health plans, hospitals or health systems, individual or group healthcare provider practice(s), Affordable Care Organizations, retail health clinics or other health clinics, technology vendors or public data systems (e.g., health exchange), public health agencies, or non-profit community organizations.

¹⁹ It may not be possible to directly link issues related to the COVID-19 pandemic or other novel pathogens to an existing Healthy People 2030 infectious disease objective. If that is the case, justification for addressing the problem can include the impact and burden of the health problem supported by peer-reviewed literature.

Award Information

Award Amount:

For Option A (Prospective) Research Projects (~3-year project): Up to \$750,000 per award

For Option B (Retrospective) Research Projects (1–2-year project): Up to \$250,000 per award

Expected Number of Awards: Two

Eligible Entities: Funding is available to research teams led by an academic institution or a 501(c)(3) organization. Proposals from organizations that have an advocacy focus to promote the industry of pharmacy or pharmacists, and for-profit educational organizations, will not be considered.

Deadline for Submission of Proposals: Proposals can be submitted until October 27, 2022, at 11:59 pm EST.

Anticipated Award Notification: No later than December 23, 2022

Proposal Requirements

All Applicants must make their electronic submission online prior to the 11:59 pm EST, October 27, 2022, deadline. A link for electronic submissions will open at www.nacdsfoundation.org/rfp on or about September 13, 2022. Instructions for submitting the proposal are described below. The proposal should include an Appendix.

Each research team will be required to provide information on the following domains in their proposal:

Title of the Project	Provide the full title of the project and a short form of the title (short title should be maximum 60 characters, including spaces)
Abstract	Provide an abstract (1,000 words or less) highlighting the key components of the research proposal, including the title of the research, a brief statement on the magnitude of the health problem the proposal addresses, specify which of the three research topic tracks above will be addressed and the research topic to be explored, goal and objectives, methodology, target population (and rationale for selecting that population), interventions (if relevant), research partners, possible outcomes, the plan for disseminating the findings of the research, and how the findings from this project might be used by other organizations or in other settings to advance public health or patient care.
Introduction and overview	Describe the public health problem, the population(s) affected, the burden of the disease or condition. The problem statement should also address the relevance of the proposed research: Why is it important that this problem is solved? Briefly describe previous research studies and relevant current gaps in knowledge or strategies. Discuss needed actions

	to improve the condition or health status of the population described.
Principal Investigator	<p>Provide the following information for the Principal Investigator(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name, Title, Affiliation (including Department/Division) • Contact (email, phone, address) • Role in the project and time commitment (include a description of any in-kind support) • The title, funding source and amount, dates of initiation and completion, and role of all recent (last five years) and ongoing grant-funded research. Include any journal articles or other reports that describe the study and/or its results. • Verification for the Principal Investigator's affiliated 501(c)(3) organization or public academic institution • Include in the Appendix a NIH-formatted bio sketch for the Principal Investigator <p>Describe the staffing plan, including qualifications for each position, percentage time they will spend on the project, and roles and responsibilities. Provide the following information for all other research team members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name, Title, Affiliation • Role in the project and time commitment (include a description of any in-kind support) • NOTE: Priority will be given to research teams that include at least one emerging faculty researcher or organizational leader with limited research experience • Include in the Appendix a NIH-formatted bio sketch for all staff
Project Goal and Objectives	Provide a clear description of the overarching project goal and include SMART ²⁰ project objectives.
Project Partners	<p>List all partners, subcontractors, and consultants involved in this research project including a detailed description of each of their roles in the project and why they were selected.</p> <p>Partners must include one or more Community Pharmacy(ies) (include information on individual locations) and also include at least one other relevant partner (include information on individual locations):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payors/Health Plan(s) • Hospital(s)/Health System(s) (include individual locations) • Individual or group healthcare provider practice(s),

²⁰ SMART objectives are: specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable Care Organizations • Retail health clinics or other health clinics • Technology vendors or public data systems (e.g., health exchange) • Public Health Agency(ies)Non-profit community organizations • Others <p>For each project partner, please include the rationale for the organization's inclusion in the project and highlight the experience of and any current or prior similar research initiatives undertaken in the last five years.</p> <p>Please include a letter of support from senior leadership of each participating organization/partner affirming commitment to participate fully in the project as proposed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letters should specifically note the role the partner will play in the project, an agreement to participate in project planning, specify how they will enroll patients (if applicable), share any data sets proposed in the application, abide by data confidentiality plans, and (if relevant) under what circumstances they may adopt the new intervention if the results warrant. • Letters of support from for-profit entities should describe financial or in-kind contributions, and it is preferred that letters from payors/health plans include a confirmed understanding that no payment(s) will be directly made to payors/health plans from NACDS Foundation research funds. • All letters of support should be included in the Appendix included in the Proposal.
Methods: Research Design	<p>Applicants must specify if they will be utilizing an Option A (Prospective Research Project) or Option B (Retrospective Research Project) research design. Provide a detailed description of the overall project design and analytic plan, specifically stating the research question, and the study design that will be used to pursue the project goal and objectives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a prospective approach will be used, please provide information on: the expected duration of the study; a description of the qualitative or quantitative methods (or a mixed methods approach) that will be used; the projected sample size for the research project, along with the appropriate power calculations (if applicable); identification of participants and enrollment methods; a description of the intervention that will be tested (and if a control group will be included); frequency of interaction with study participants; estimated time necessary to enroll and

	<p>subsequently follow-up on the appropriate number of patients; potential risks to the study participants and strategies to mitigate those risks; how informed consent will be obtained; a description of the control population; and a description of the analytic approach (including key variables).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a retrospective approach will be used, please provide information on: the expected duration of the study; the source(s) and data collection methods of the dataset that will be analyzed; a description of the qualitative or quantitative methods (or a mixed methods approach) that will be used; permissions granted to access and analyze the dataset(s), and the analytic approach (including key variables).
Implementation Approach	<p>Applicants must specify the implementation approach or framework that will be used for the research, and for prospective research, how implementation science may be applied to promote fidelity of the intervention and feasibility. Outline any needed training that will be provided to research staff and/or participating partners, as well as the support and monitoring that will be provided throughout the project to ensure successful implementation of the research.</p>
Patient Population	<p>Priority will be given to proposals that address research for at least one of these U.S. populations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High incidence of preventable health conditions such as high infant mortality, high levels of chronic diseases, high levels of infectious disease, high levels of community stress and/or mental health issues, or high levels of behavior that puts people at risk for poor health (such as smoking and inadequate or unhealthy food intake). • High levels of food insecurity, poverty or high proportion of the population that is low income, as well as uninsured or under insured populations. • Reduced access to healthcare (e.g., Having no or few providers or health clinics). <p>Describe the patient population that will be targeted for an intervention or research, including information such as geographic location, health status, demographics, access to healthcare, sources of healthcare coverage, community environmental conditions, etc.</p> <p>Please include a rationale for selecting the study population and how they are integral to pursuing the project's goals and objectives.</p>

Intervention	<p>This Request for Proposals (RFP) seeks innovative solutions to persistent health issues. Applicants are encouraged to develop creative approaches for tackling the highlighted health topics. If Applicants wish to build on previous studies, only responses that do not replicate previous studies, but instead, create novel approaches, are designed to improve on prior methodologies, or provide meaningful advances will be considered for funding.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe which conditions/disease states will be targeted in the intervention. Please include a rationale or justification for why those conditions were chosen. • Describe if/how the interventions proposed have previously been tested or used in similar or different populations and the rationale for the selected intervention(s). • Provide information about any preliminary data collected or pilot testing of the intervention. • Clearly describe how the intervention(s) will be delivered (face-to-face, telephonic, bedside, etc.) or how the research will be conducted (if using a retrospective approach). • Define how patients will be identified for inclusion in the study (prospective) or how the dataset used was identified and is available to the Applicant for research (retrospective). • If prospective research, describe how patients will be enrolled and safeguards that will be employed to protect patient privacy and sensitive information. • Describe the proposed plan for determination of the proposed research by an Institutional Review Board or other scientific/objective partners. (IRB approval is not required before funding award determination)
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Methods: Data Collection and Data Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe how information will be collected or accessed, the form that data will be collected/compiled, parameters for data documentation and management, data security, data backups and storage, how patient confidentiality and privacy concerns will be addressed after data collection, and how relevant data will be shared and exchanged between project partners. • Describe how information systems will be protected to ensure that only authorized project staff have access to files and computer systems that include project data (especially patient information), as well as methods for the protection of sensitive information and confidentiality of data. Please also describe the measures in place to ensure security, preserve data integrity, and preserve patient privacy.
Timeline and Milestones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a table that outlines the timeline for the project including all project requirements and milestones needed to achieve the project's goal and objectives. (See the NACDS Foundation's Budget Template for further instructions). • The Applicant should also provide a description of all key project milestones including the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Participate in a "kick-off" meeting in early to mid-January 2023 to discuss the proposed work plan and overall approach to the project. ○ Submit an updated overall workplan to conduct project activities with key project-related milestones delineated within, project management plan, analysis plan and an updated timeline for activities 20 days after the "Kick-off" meeting. ○ Provide quarterly written progress reports detailing accomplishments and progress towards milestones and deliverables. ○ Participate in monthly telephone/video meetings on a mutually agreed upon schedule with NACDS Foundation staff. ○ Submit a final written report summarizing research approach; methodology used; findings/results; a discussion of the results including implications for public health/patientcare; how the results could be scalable and sustainable; plans for dissemination and publication of findings; and any challenges faced during the conduct of the project and solutions applied. ○ Production of a journal article that describes the project, the results, and implications of the findings.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several additional timeframe considerations to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Applicants should consider plans to begin enrolling patients within 120 days after project start. ○ Prospective research projects should provide interventions and collect data for a minimum of 20-24 months in duration. ○ Data collection may extend an additional 180 days beyond the intervention. ○ Include sufficient time to develop a final report, manuscript, and disseminate findings.
Evaluation	<p>The following factors will be used by the NACDS Foundation to evaluate proposals:</p> <p>1. Technical Approach and Capability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A detailed and comprehensive statement of the problem, scope, and purpose of the project to demonstrate complete understanding of intent and requirements of this request for proposals and is feasible to complete within the specified timeframe. • Discussion of the health problem or issue that the research will address and its alignment with Healthy People 2030 Objectives or other national initiatives to improve health.²¹ • Description of the target population and the rationale for selecting this population. • A clear and concise narrative that addresses the proposed methodologic and analytic approach. • Description of the Applicant’s capabilities, and experience to meet the technical requirements in the RFP. • Utilizes a new or a novel approach for the intervention or research topic; does not exactly replicate a previous study’s methodology. • Describes the use of technology and considers interoperability to achieve the aims of the research. • Milestones clearly illustrate the sequence and timing of proposed activities. • Detailed plan for data collection, data management and data analysis plans.

²¹ It may not be possible to directly link issues related to the COVID-19 pandemic or other novel pathogens to an existing Healthy People 2030 objective. If that is the case, justification for addressing the problem can include the impact and burden of the health problem supported by peer-reviewed literature.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sufficiently describes patient privacy and confidentiality and IRB determination or plan to receive IRB determination (if relevant). • Plan for anticipating and addressing difficulties that may be encountered when performing the research requirements and feasible solutions to address these issues. • Describes how the results derived from this project can be translated in actions or programs that will be scalable and sustainable (e.g., how the findings from this project might be used by researchers or other organizations or in other settings), the impact of the findings on individual and/or community health outcomes, and how these results will be disseminated to others. • Plan for developing a journal manuscript as the culmination of the research effort. <p>2. Organizational Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description of at least one similar project completed within the past five years that clearly demonstrates the Applicant's experience in performing projects of similar scope, size and complexity to the requirements described in this RFP. • Description of how past organizational and personnel experience and current capabilities of the Applicant are commensurate with requirements described in this RFP including how the Applicant will apply the findings for projects undertaken in the RFP to real-world programs or processes. • Includes Letters of Support from all partners that specify the role each partner will play in the project, an agreement to participate in project planning, specify how they will enroll patients (if applicable), share any data sets proposed in the application, abide by data confidentiality plans, and (if relevant) under what circumstances they may adopt the new intervention if the results warrant. • Letters of support from for-profit entities should describe financial or in-kind contributions, and it is preferred that letters from payors/health plans include a confirmed understanding that no payment(s) will be directly made to payors/health plans from NACDS Foundation research funds.
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	<p>3. Management Approach and Staffing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A list of proposed personnel stating their experience, education, skills, and qualifications to conduct the project. The background of the personnel should reflect the length and variety of experience and expertise needed to conduct the research. If subcontractors are proposed, provide the same information to support their qualifications as well. Include the role and level of effort each staff member will devote to the project for each year of the project. • Management plan that describes how the Principal Investigator/Project Manager will monitor and guide the work of all staff, how the Applicant will interface with NACDS Foundation staff, as well as a clear delineation of staff authorities and lines of responsibility. • Plans for quality assurance and/or continuous improvement plan that will be used throughout the project to ensure patient care interventions and research reports are high quality and milestones are achieved on time. <p>4. Alignment of Proposed Research Project and Approach with NACDS Foundation Purpose</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant clearly addresses a research effort to improve health, address inequities and increase access to care for underserved populations to improve population health. • Research purposes and aims do not address any of the following: business or marketing issues; demand for, or satisfaction with, certain pharmacy services; analysis or advocacy regarding pharmacy regulatory or business issues (e.g. the profitability of providing certain pharmacy or healthcare services or the pricing of pharmacy services); promoting regulatory or marketplace recognition of pharmacists as healthcare providers; or the promotion of pharmacy services or the promotion of the pharmacy profession. <p>5. Budget</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The budget proposal for the project submitted separately from the rest of the proposal in an electronic file using the Budget Template (Tab 2) provided in the electronic grant submission platform, and available for download at www.nacdsfoundation.org/rfp.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructions for completing the budget proposal are available in Tab 1 of the file provided in the electronic grant submission platform, and available for download at www.nacdsfoundation.org/rfp. • The budget plan should include the title of the project and name and contact information for the Principal Investigator. Applicants should include a detailed budget that defines all anticipated reasonable costs and in-kind contributions necessary to conduct the research project to achieve project milestones including all staff, materials and services, subcontracted items, equipment, travel, direct costs, and indirect costs. • A short narrative that explains the budget proposal should be included in the Comment section of the Budget Template (Tab 2), provided in the electronic grant submission platform. • The budget should also include specific periodic payments that are linked to achievement of key project milestones on the table provided in the Budget Template file (Tab 3). • NOTE: In accordance with NACDS Foundation guidelines, the Facilities and Administrative (indirect) costs may not exceed fifteen percent (15%) of the total award amount. In addition, no funds will be allocated to pay any cost for the preparation and submission of a proposal.
Length of Proposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Proposal shall not exceed 25 pages in length, including citations. Pages shall be in Word, double-spaced, Times New Roman equivalent at 11-point font or larger and with margins of .75" or larger. • The Proposal must use headers and follow the format in alignment with the key areas listed above. • An Appendix should be attached to the proposal that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ An organizational chart that lists all staff and their roles ○ Biographic sketches of all staff to support the staffing plan ○ Letters of support from research partners <p>The Appendix will not count against the maximum proposal length of 25 pages.</p> • The budget plan for the project will not count against the maximum proposal length of 25 pages.

Statement of Understanding of Terms and Conditions	Submitted proposals must contain a signed statement by an authorized representative that indicates understanding of the requirements of the RFP, and agreement to be bound to the terms and conditions of the proposal.
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Questions regarding the Proposal

All questions related to the RFP objectives, requirements, instructions, and terminology should be submitted via www.nacdsfoundation.org/rfp by **September 22, 2022**, at 12:00 p.m. EST. Answers to all submitted questions will be posted on www.nacdsfoundation.org/rfp by end of day September 30, 2022.

Please note that Applicants who fail to report a known or suspected problem with the RFP or fail to seek clarification and/or correction of the RFP shall submit a proposal at their own risk.

Submission Information and Proposal Deadline

The NACDS Foundation will electronically accept full proposals until end of day (11:59 p.m. EST) on **October 27, 2022** via the submission portal, which will be made available on www.nacdsfoundation.org/rfp. The Appendix should be included at the end of the proposal in the same document. The proposal (including the Appendix) should use the following filename: [Organization Name.Proposal.date](#) and should be uploaded as a single Word file through the submission portal. The budget proposal should be submitted in a separate electronic Excel file using the template provided, and use the following filename: [Organization Name.Budget.date](#).

Only complete electronic submissions (e.g., includes both the project proposal and budget proposal) that are received before the deadline will be accepted. Proposals received after the deadline or submitted by hard copy, by mail or other means of delivery, or by facsimile will not be reviewed.

General Terms and Conditions

Confidentiality of Proposals

The content of submitted proposals will be held in confidence by NACDS Foundation to the extent that it will not be divulged to any other proposer. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the NACDS Foundation expressly reserves the right to have the proposal analyzed or reviewed by an independent review committee and by any other third party under obligation of confidentiality to the Foundation.

Contractual Obligations

Neither this RFP nor the selection of a proposal by the independent review committee shall constitute an offer to contract to conduct the research. Only a written grant agreement executed by both the Foundation and the selected researcher will create any obligations on behalf of either the Foundation or the researcher.

RFP and Negotiation Cancellation

The NACDS Foundation reserves the right to amend or cancel this RFP for any or no reason at any time, with or without notification. The NACDS Foundation reserves the right to stop grant negotiations at any time prior to the execution of a written grant agreement without liability or further obligation.

Potential for Future Funding Opportunities

The NACDS Foundation reserves the right to hold all submitted proposals on file and consider proposals not selected for future funding opportunities.

Post-submission Communication

The NACDS Foundation reserves the right to ask an Applicant questions about or request a presentation regarding a submitted proposal. The NACDS Foundation reserves the right to hold an on-site visit to finalist Applicants. Please note that some or all Applicants who are not selected for funding may not receive a response of any kind, and that submitted materials cannot be retrieved/files cannot be returned.

Cost for Proposal Preparation

Costs incurred in the development and submission of the proposal will be the sole responsibility of the proposer and cannot be charged to the NACDS Foundation nor included in any cost element of the proposal.

Proposal Selection

The NACDS Foundation reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals and may enter into negotiations with any researcher without prior notification to any other researcher. The NACDS Foundation shall have the sole right and option to use whatever evaluation and selection criteria it deems appropriate in selecting a researcher; the criteria outlined in this proposal will be used for evaluation and selection. An objective review committee will make recommendations based on evaluation criteria outlined in this RFP to the NACDS Foundation.

Restricted Grant Agreement Process

The award of grant money will be conditional on the research team entering into a restricted grant agreement with the NACDS Foundation. It is the NACDS Foundation's

intention to provide active oversight to the research project, and this will include, but is not limited to, a kick-off meeting, regular monthly conference calls with the research team, quarterly written reports, and observation of the research project in action. The NACDS Foundation support shall be recognized on any and all publicly distributed materials.

Statement of Understanding of Terms and Conditions

Submitted proposals must contain a signed statement by an authorized representative that indicates understanding of the requirements of the RFP, and agreement to be bound to the terms and conditions of the proposal.

For more information, please visit www.nacdsfoundation.org/rfp.