

Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs (CDMRP): At a Glance



Background

The Office of Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs (CDMRP) was established by the Department of Defense (DOD) in 1993 to eliminate breast cancer. Over the years, numerous other cancers and disease programs have been added. CDMRP is currently a collection of 38 programs that target research funding to specific diseases including cancer. CDMRP grants target innovative research that does not overlap projects funded by other agencies.

Funding

Congress appropriates funds for the CDMRP on an annual basis in the Defense Appropriations Act as “Undistributed Medical Research,” with conference reports typically specifying the funding of individually named research programs based on constituent and advocacy group input. For FY24, Congress appropriated \$1.546 billion across the 38 research programs. This includes a total of **\$593 million for a variety of cancer types** and the Peer Reviewed Cancer Research Program (PRCRP),¹ a level approximately 8% of NCI funding.

Since the inception of CDMRP, breast cancer funding has garnered the highest cumulative funding, a total of \$4.39 billion through FY24. At the close of FY23 this program alone had led to 19,416 scientific research papers, 1,383 patents, and 222 clinical trials². Across all cancers, research ranges from basic biology to drug development, diagnostics, and prevention. Other major disease allocations in FY24 CDMRP funding outside of cancer include peer-reviewed medical at \$370 million, psychological health/ traumatic brain injury at \$175 million, and spinal cord injury and ALS each at \$40 million.

| Cancer CDMRP Appropriations (\$million) | | | |
|---|-------|----------|-----|
| FUNDING PROGRAM | FY24 | FY 25 CR | CUT |
| Breast cancer | 150 | 130 | 20 |
| Peer-reviewed cancer | 130 | 130 | 0 |
| Prostate cancer | 110 | 75 | 35 |
| Kidney cancer | 50 | 0 | 50 |
| Ovarian cancer | 45 | 15 | 30 |
| Melanoma | 40 | 40 | 0 |
| Lung cancer | 25 | 0 | 25 |
| Rare Cancers | 17.5 | 17.5 | 0 |
| Pancreatic cancer | 15 | 0 | 15 |
| Glioblastoma | 10 | 0 | 10 |
| Total | 592.5 | 407.5 | 185 |

Key Funding Facts FY25

- For FY24, Congress appropriated a total of **\$593 million** total for cancer-specific programs.
- FY25 was funded with a continuing resolution that **cut \$859 million (57%)** from the overall FY24 CDMRP program levels and **cut \$185 million (31%) from cancer programs**.
- Four cancer programs were completely zeroed out.

¹ Congressional Research Service, “Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs Funding for FY2024,” accessed March 17, 2025

<https://www.congress.gov/crs-product/IF10349>

² https://cdmrp.health.mil/bcrp/research_highlights/24Sukumar_highlight.aspx