

California Breast Cancer Policy Initiative

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Approved by the Council Policy Committee 9/12/14

Approved by the California Breast Cancer Research Program Research Council 10/3/14

CBCRP Policy Committee

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Policy Research Advisory Group (PRAG)

**Marion H. E. Kavanaugh--Lynch, MD,
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Director, California Breast Cancer Research Program
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To Be Named

OVERVIEW

The California Breast Cancer Research Program (CBCRP) is developing a new funding initiative aimed at closing the gap between research and policy (both public and private) with the goal of funding research that contributes to creating an environment in California that leads to less breast cancer.

In brief, CBCRP staff, reviewers, and funded researchers will bring scientific expertise to a newly created Policy Research Advisory Group (PRAG) which will bring expertise in policy needs, data gaps, and communication strategies. Overseen by the California Breast Cancer Research Council, the PRAG will create, propose to fund, and distribute policy-relevant research that can have an impact on creating change.

Using an open, competitive, peer-reviewed process, CBCRP will establish a pool of pre-qualified policy research teams who are poised to quickly fill knowledge gaps to inform breast cancer-relevant policy. We will simultaneously gather policy topics and specific research questions from our stakeholders. With the help of the PRAG, we will select research questions and contract with our pre-qualified policy teams to generate answers and then effectively deliver those answers to policy. PRAG members will receive bimonthly progress reports on projects and will review and revise dissemination plans and project reports.

I. BACKGROUND

The California Breast Cancer Research Program

The California Breast Cancer Research Program (CBCRP) is the nation's largest state-funded breast cancer research effort and among the largest breast cancer research funders in the world. The program's mission is to eliminate breast cancer by leading innovation in research, communication, and collaboration in the California scientific and lay communities. The CBCRP was founded in 1993, when breast cancer activists, scientists, clinicians, state legislators, and University of California officials collaborated to win passage in the state legislature of the California Breast Cancer Act.¹ The CBCRP is funded by a tax on tobacco products, voluntary state personal income tax form check-off, and individual contributions.

The CBCRP is led by the Director, Marion H. E. Kavanaugh-Lynch, M.D., M.P.H. Program funding recommendations and planning future directions of the organization are the responsibility of the Breast Cancer Research Council (Council), a group of 15 people chosen to represent those affected by breast cancer and the institutions that can help find a solution. The CBCRP supports new approaches that other agencies may be reluctant to fund. Since 1994, the CBCRP has awarded more than \$230 million in nearly 1,000 grants to more than 100 institutions across the state.

Toward an Innovative Research Agenda: The Policy Initiative

To prepare for its second decade of research funding, in 2001 the CBCRP initiated a comprehensive review of the program. The Director, staff, and Council evaluated grants made by the CBCRP in relation to the program's mission and funding criteria. Scientists, clinicians, and advocates contributed to this review by preparing position papers, making presentations, and participating in Council meetings.

The review culminated in March 2004 with a five-year Strategic Plan decision by the Council. That plan included the development of a Policy Initiative, utilizing a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) mechanism for directed, contracted research on targeted, timely policy and health services topics. Due to the magnitude of the other new initiatives included in that five-year plan, staff did not have the capacity to develop the Policy Initiative at that time.

In March 2010, the Council adopted a new five-year strategic plan that again called for allocating \$150,000 annually for a rapid-response mechanism to fund policy research. **NOW IN 2014 >>>**

This plan sets out the process for implementing this vision.

¹ 1993 Breast Cancer Act (i.e., AB 2055 (B. Friedman) [Chapter 661, Statutes of 1993] and AB 478 (B. Friedman) [AB 478, Statutes of 1993])

II. The Policy Initiative

The purpose of the Policy Initiative is to fund directed policy research on issues related to prevention, detection, and treatment of breast cancer, as well as research into the formulation of policy alternatives that will reduce the incidence of and morbidity and mortality from breast cancer in California. It is the intent of the Program to fund projects totaling up to \$150,000 annually. The goal is to fill a critical gap to allow policy changes to be grounded in science that is relevant and credible.

In this context, policy is defined broadly to include public policy such as state and local legislative and regulatory efforts, as well as private policies such as workplaces, corporation, health care institutions, and other institutions. For example, there may be research funded to support a study that can strengthen the case for regulating chemical use in California or there may be an advocacy group working to encourage hospitals to reduce the usage of disposable plastic products.

To implement the Policy Initiative, science, advocate, and policy experts as well as interested individuals and organizations will contribute to the development of policy topics, research questions and recommendations made to the Council.

Expert Groups

The following expert groups will be established and engaged to guide the Policy Initiative. This expertise will be incorporated through participation in one or more of the five groups that will be engaged: Council Policy Committee, Policy Research Advisory Group (PRAG), individual topic nominators, peer reviewers and the Breast Cancer Research Council. The composition, charge, and responsibility of each group are described below.

1. Breast Cancer Research Council Policy Committee



Composition

The Council Policy Committee consists of volunteer members of the California Breast Cancer Research Council who are familiar with the policy landscape of California. The chair is selected by members of the Committee. To avoid conflicts of interest, Council members are ineligible for CBCRP funding.

Charge and Responsibilities

- Review and approve the Implementation Plan;
- Oversee and revise implementation;
- Identify and solicit PRAG members;
- Identify and solicit Policy Initiative topics;

2. Policy Research Advisory Group (PRAG)

Composition

The PRAG will be made up of California-based policy-makers (state legislators, state and federal legislative staff, former state governmental staff), representatives of organizations involved in breast cancer-related policy development and advocates. Members will be solicited by staff and Council, will be selected by staff, and will serve renewable terms of 2 or 3 years. A chair will be selected by the PRAG members. Member(s) of the Council Policy Committee may serve as *ex officio* members. To avoid conflicts of interest, the PRAG members will not include policy researchers and will be ineligible for CBCRP Policy Initiative funding.

Charge and Responsibilities

- Identify and solicit Policy Initiative topics;
- Review the CBCRP portfolio for projects that could impact public policy as potential topics for consideration;
- Identify current and emerging policy issues related to breast cancer that would benefit from research;
- Review all topics nominated through the Call for Topics;
- Review, and recommend to Council topics and research questions for funding;
- Review Policy Initiative research reports and
- Assist in developing communication and dissemination plans for completed projects.

3. Individual Topic Nominators

To include the voices of as many experts, affected communities and other interested people and organizations, information will be routinely disseminated and nominations for topics/research questions sought through CBCRP and organizational partner web sites, listservs and social media. High stakeholder involvement will:

- Educate stakeholders;
- Bring more stakeholders to the process and provide them with the opportunity to nominate

- policy topics for consideration;
- Foster a body of people interested in the outcomes of the project;
- Translate the findings back to the public; and
- Contribute to CBCRP’s communications strategy.

4. Peer Reviewers

Composition

Peer reviewers from outside of California with expertise in breast cancer topics, health policy and/or breast cancer advocacy will be recruited by staff.

Charge and Responsibilities

Peer Reviewers will:

- Review, discuss, and score RFQ Applications;
- Review potential topics for feasibility

5. California Breast Cancer Research Council

Composition

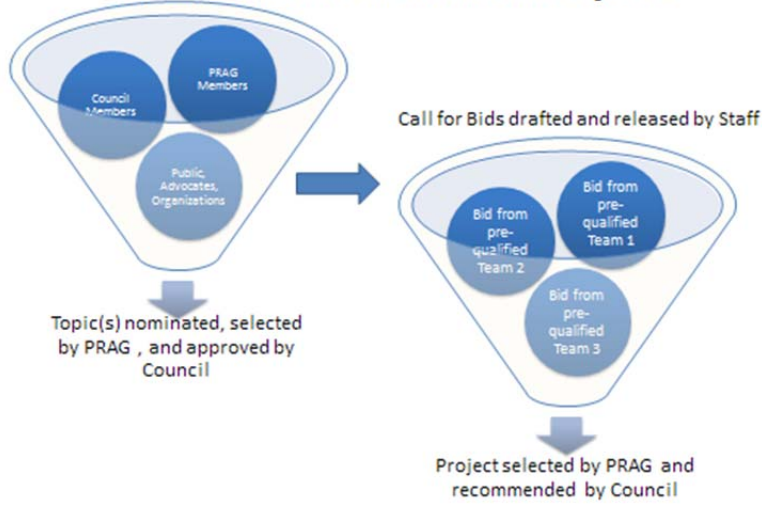
The Breast Cancer Research Council is made up of advocates, scientists, clinicians and representatives from industry and nonprofit health organizations volunteers who have extensive interest in breast cancer issues. Each member serves a 3-year term and is ineligible for CBCRP funding.

Charge and Responsibilities

The Council will:

- Make final decisions regarding policy topics and research questions for the CBCRP to pursue.
- Make final recommendations for inclusion in the RFQ pool.
- Make final recommendations for funding of policy research projects.

From Idea to Funded Project



Products to Support Policy Initiative Implementation

Several types of materials will be created to inform the PRAG, the Council and Policy Committee, Individual topic nominators, applicants and reviewers throughout the process. These include:

1. Policy Initiative Implementation Plan
Describes the overall project and the steps that will be undertaken. Includes a description of the timeline for funding.
2. PRAG manual and agreement template
Describes the roles, responsibilities, terms and processes by which the PRAG will complete its work.
3. Request for Qualifications and application materials
Describes the qualifications of a team to become a CBCRP Policy Team that will be eligible to be called on to conduct future studies, as well as the application process.
4. Call for Topics and on-line submission
Describes the process and required elements for any interested party to nominate a topic for consideration by the PRAG and Council.
5. Instructions for Bids and application materials
Describes how one or more CBCRP Policy Teams can apply to receive funding to address a chosen topic.
6. Policy Initiative Report template
Describes the required elements and format for reports to the PRAG.

Policy Initiative Implementation Plan

The plan will be drafted by staff. It will then be reviewed, edited, and approved first by the Council Policy Committee and subsequently by the Council.

PRAG manual and agreement template

The PRAG manual will be drafted by staff, then reviewed, edited and approved by the PRAG. The PRAG agreement template will be written and finalized by staff.

Request for Qualifications and application materials

The RFQ will call for teams (formal or ad hoc) of policy researchers in California to apply to become part of a pre-qualified pool of policy research teams that CBCRP can call on to conduct short (less than six months in duration), rapid (within one month of request) policy research projects. CBCRP will identify potential applicants (specific schools, programs, centers, individuals) and conduct visits with them to encourage applications. Applications will be peer reviewed and selections will be recommended by the Council. The resulting pool will remain eligible for three years.

Call for Topics and on-line submission

The Call for Topics will be widely disseminated through usual CBCRP channels, including an on-line topic nomination site. Any individual, group, organization or institution is eligible to nominate a topic for consideration, including Council members, PRAG members, and legislators. The on-line topic nomination site will ask for the nominator, proposed policy research topic, specific knowledge gap or research question, policy target, expected policy timeline and contact information for others with knowledge about the topic.

Topics will be reviewed, revised and prioritized by the PRAG annually. The PRAG will present their recommendations to the Council for consideration at a regularly scheduled meeting.

Instructions for Bids and application materials

Once a topic has been recommended by the Council and approved by the Director, staff will select one or more teams from whom Bids will be solicited. Bids will include the research plan and a dissemination plan that may or may not include the Topic Nominator. The resulting Bid(s) will be reviewed by the PRAG and negotiated by staff. Contract deliverables will include bimonthly reports and a final report to be published after internal review by staff and PRAG.

Policy Initiative Report template

The report templates will be drafted by staff and reviewed, edited and finalized by the PRAG.

III. Anticipated Timeline

