

THE
MANNA
INSTITUTE

the science of food as medicine

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

Measuring the Impact of
MANNA's Medically Tailored Meal
Program in Patients with a
Non-terminal Cancer Diagnosis

IMPORTANT DATES

February 17, 2021

Virtual Information Session

March 31, 2021

Full Proposals Due

June 1, 2021

Grant recipients notified

TOTAL AWARDS

A maximum of three (3) pilot grants of up to Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000) (each, a "Pilot") awarded to selected recipients for a period of no more than one (1) year through the MANNA Institute (the "Institute").

INTRODUCTION & PURPOSE

The Institute studies the impact of nutrition on health for people with serious illnesses. The Institute leads research and evaluation initiatives, educates healthcare practitioners and consumers, and shares findings and best practices for improved nutrition service delivery and healthcare transformation. The Institute is a division of MANNA which is a nonprofit, community-based organization in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania that prepares and delivers medically tailored meals to people with serious illnesses who need nourishment to heal. Over MANNA's 30 year history, the organization has developed a comprehensive approach to nutrition care by providing 21 meals per week designed by registered dietitians to meet the complex nutritional needs of each MANNA client. Clients also receive nutrition counseling from MANNA's registered dietitians.

Nearly 40% of MANNA's clients have a primary diagnosis of cancer and are referred to MANNA for nutritional support during a cancer treatment cycle. Maintaining body weight and nutritional status during cancer treatment is a challenging and critical need for this population. By delivering meals that are protein and calorie-appropriate and still tasteful and appealing for those with diminished appetites, MANNA aims to eliminate barriers to adequate caloric and nutrient intake and ensure these patients have the food and nutrition they need to help sustain them in a healthy manner during a cancer treatment. While the importance of nutrition support during cancer treatment is well-documented, there are gaps in empirical knowledge about the impact of nutrition interventions on treatment adherence and other relevant outcomes related to cancer survivorship.

The purpose of this RFP and the potential awarding of each Pilot is to:

- measure the impact of MANNA’s medically tailored meal program and nutrition counseling services on a defined population of patients who each have a non-terminal cancer diagnosis; and
- identify appropriate outcomes and potential evaluation tools that can be used to build a robust clinical trial protocol.

The RFP is not specific to one type of cancer. Each Pilot shall be used to study the impact of nutrition support for those who are not at the end-of-life as a result of the cancer diagnosis but, rather, have a good chance of extended survivorship.

The findings from each Pilot shall be shared with MANNA and will form the basis for a follow-up request for proposal (the “FRFP”) from the Institute. The Institute plans to issue the FRFP for the design and conduct of a randomized clinical trial (RCT) once the Pilot findings are shared with the Institute. Additional details regarding the FRFP shall be provided in the future.

ISSUE TO BE RESEARCHED AND ADDRESSED BY A SUCCESSFUL PILOT RECIPIENT

What is the effect of MANNA’s program of medically tailored meals and nutrition counseling on health outcomes and healthcare utilization/costs in patients with non-terminal cancer?

The purpose of the Pilot is to identify outcomes and develop measurement tools that could be included in the Institute’s ongoing activities, including but not limited to the FRFP. Outcomes which shall be measured by a Pilot recipient shall include but are not limited to:

- treatment adherence
- food and nutrient intake
- nutritional status including clinical biomarkers

- physical health and/or function
- emotional health
- quality of life
- healthcare costs

A party interested in applying for the Pilot should specify the primary and secondary outcomes and quality measures considered important in monitoring the effectiveness of nutritional support in non-terminal cancer care patients.

A Pilot recipient may use any experimental or observational research design for the RFP. A successful Pilot shall be designed to capture outcome measures that support the eventual development of the FRFP.

A Pilot recipient may apply for the FRFP and a non-Pilot recipient may also apply for the FRFP. By submitting the RFP, the interested Party understands and agrees that all information provided may be shared with other parties as part of the FRFP process.

EXPECTED DELIVERABLES

If selected to receive a Pilot, the following deliverables to the Institute are required:

- Quarterly written reports detailing project status
- Monthly phone calls between the PI and the Institute's Director
- A final written report detailing research methods, results, and key findings delivered to the Institute
- Appropriate recognition of the role of MANNA and the Institute in awarding and managing the Pilot if results are published (in print or on-line) for any publication or organization, including but not limited to the Pilot recipient; and
- Additional items requested by the Institute

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

MANNA requires that any Pilot recipient has the demonstrated capacity to manage a grant of this size, either directly or with the benefit of technical assistance. To be considered for a Pilot, an applicant must satisfy each of the following eligibility criteria:

- Be an organization (type of entity and/or for-profit versus not-for-profit is not determinative) that is validly in existence and is able to fulfil the necessary Pilot requirements within MANNA's service area (see <https://mannapa.org/services/where-we-serve/>.) The organization must remain in operation and in existence for the duration of the Pilot. An individual is not eligible to apply for the Pilot.
- Have substantive experience with respect to both treatment of cancer patients and nutrition support for individuals with a cancer diagnosis.
- Identify the key personnel and full contact information for the individual(s) who submit the Pilot application; oversee the Pilot if selected as a recipient; receive and administer Pilot payment(s); in real-time monitor the use of Pilot funds; and, submit written reports and updates to MANNA with respect to the Pilot as directed by MANNA.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

The competitive application process for the Pilot requires submission of a complete proposal which shall be determined by the Institute. The proposal must be received by the Institute on or before **5pm Eastern Standard Time Wednesday, March 31, 2021**. The proposal should be directed to Jule Anne Henstenburg, MANNA's Director of Research and Evaluation; 420 North 20th Street; Philadelphia, PA 19130. MANNA may not award any or all of the Pilot(s) if MANNA concludes no submission satisfies the study objectives.

Application instructions for proposals are detailed in the appendix. After careful review of all proposals received on or before the submission deadline, MANNA will select the proposal(s) that meet or exceed evaluation criteria for the Pilot.

In general, proposals will require the following application components:

- Well-defined outcome goals related to MANNA's intervention with a specific cancer population
- Evaluation strategy and analysis plan for proposed outcomes
- Process plan and timeline including expected deliverables
- Detailed project budget including details of any overhead allocation(s)
- Available resources and partners
- Identifiable obstacles

PROPOSAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

Pilot proposals will be evaluated based upon the following factors including but not limited to:

1. Rationale for study of the proposed cancer population based on potential effectiveness of medically tailored meal and nutrition counseling intervention
2. Strategies for successful recruitment and retention of participants
3. Presence of any preliminary data including that available from chart reviews
4. Research design methodology, and feasibility of project timeline
5. Experience of the research team, organizational capabilities, and project budget

MANNA will provide medically tailored meals and nutrition counseling services in accordance with normal program administration (21 medically tailored meals per week and nutrition counseling from MANNA's registered dietitians). The time frame for MANNA's intervention will match that specified by the research design. These do not need to be included in the project budget.

A submitted proposal will not be returned to the applicant, regardless of the decision made by MANNA.

INFORMATION SESSION

The MANNA Institute will host a virtual information session for interested applicants to learn more about the RFP and the Pilot. There will be ample time to ask questions and hear answers from the Director of the MANNA Institute.

Date: Wednesday, February 17, 2021

Time: 11 AM – Noon, Eastern Standard Time

RSVP: Please email Adrian Glass at aglass@mannapa.org to register

APPENDIX - PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Abstract:	Proposal Summary
Section 1	Research goals and objectives
Section 2	Research methodology
Section 3	Analysis plan
Section 4	Detailed timeline of research activities
Section 5	Available resources and partners
Section 6	Identifiable obstacles
Section 7	Detailed budget
Section 8	Curriculum vitae of principal investigator and research staff