



the science of food as medicine

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

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

Are these pilot grants appropriate for university-based researchers who are not direct care providers?

Yes, with an appropriate project.

Is the award amount \$50,000 per pilot, or \$50,000 split amongst the three pilot recipients?

\$50,000 per pilot will be awarded. A maximum of 3 pilot projects will be awarded funding.

What is MANNA's standard program model for patients with cancer? Length of services, nutrition counseling, etc.

MANNA's services are standardized and comprehensive. We make weekly deliveries of 21 freshly prepared, frozen meals for our clients. We have 11 dietary modifications to meet various health needs and personal preferences. A list of available modifications and more information about the meals can be found [here](#).

The length of service varies, but typically ranges from 3-6 months for patients with cancer. We are a temporary service that functions to meet an acute nutritional risk during serious illness. Criteria for services are based solely on health status; we do not have income requirements or look at food insecurity status to determine eligibility.

Nutrition counseling is offered to all clients by MANNA's registered dietitians. If clients with cancer already have dietitians that they work with in their treatment settings, they may decline counseling from MANNA.

Are applicants permitted to include institutional overhead costs in the proposed budget?

Yes, you may use funding for institutional overhead costs. The MANNA Institute does not have a specified limit for overhead costs, however the ratio of overhead costs to project costs will be considered in the evaluation of proposals.

What is the length of the study?

Funding will be awarded by June 30, 2021 and projects must be completed within 1 year by June 30, 2022. Beyond this criterion, there are no recommendations for the length of the pilots.

Should applicants account for the cost of the intervention in the project budget?

If applicants are proposing a prospective study design that includes MANNA's services, The MANNA Institute will cover the cost of MANNA's standard programming. This includes weekly delivery of 21 medically tailored meals and access to nutrition counseling provided by MANNA's registered dietitian nutritionists.

Are there criteria for “non-terminal” or “terminal” cancer diagnoses that applicants should consider when proposing a study population?

There is no standard definition that The MANNA Institute will use to make this determination. However, the purpose of the pilot projects are to measure outcomes of MANNA’s services for populations with cancer that have a good chance of extended survivorship. A strong proposal will provide a rationale for the chosen study population that meets this purpose as defined by the researcher.

Does the proposed study population have to be underserved or food insecure?

No, MANNA does not consider food insecurity or access to resources when determining eligibility for services. Applicants do not need to include this as a parameter for the study population.

Would feasibility and/or adherence endpoints be acceptable study outcomes?

Yes, we encourage feasibility and/or adherence endpoints to be included in the pilot projects. Strong proposals will include health-related outcomes in addition to these endpoints in the study design.

Is there a minimum number of patients needed to enroll in the pilots?

No, there is no minimum number of study participants for the pilot projects.

Can funding be used to hire a research assistant or other study personnel?

Yes, funding may be used to hire research assistants or other necessary study personnel. In the proposal narrative, describe generally what qualifications they will have and who will be providing supervision. List all personnel expenses in the project budget.

Can applicants include other patient incentives for study enrollment in addition to MANNA's services?

Yes, you may describe any additional incentives in the proposal narrative and incorporate them into the project budget. MANNA does not provide additional incentives for services beyond its standard programming.

How does MANNA identify, enroll, and contact patients?

MANNA's patients are enrolled in services based upon information provided on our MANNA referral form from a healthcare provider. The referral form conveys health information to determine eligibility for services and provides contact information for MANNA's nutrition and client services staff to call patients.

For the purposes of the pilots, if applicants choose an intervention study then MANNA's staff will conduct the standard enrollment process with identified patients over the phone. Proposals should clearly describe the methods used for recruiting patients and transmitting their contact information to MANNA to initiate services.

Should study participants be existing MANNA clients/patients or new patients recruited from the applicant's organization or clinic?

This decision should be driven by the proposed study design and outcomes. Projects that recruit patients directly from the affiliated organization or clinic are desirable. However, if applicants are affiliated with an organization with high referral volume, then a retrospective chart review may be feasible. This will depend on the feasibility of accessing relevant data and having sufficient patients previously enrolled in MANNA's services.

Are there any formatting guidelines for proposals?

No, there are no formatting guidelines or page limits for proposals.

How should applications be submitted?

Proposals can be submitted as a PDF via email to Dr. Jule Anne Henstenburg at JHenstenburg@mannapa.org and Adrian Glass at AGlass@mannapa.org. We will reply to confirm receipt of your submission.

What types of services are provided by MANNA's dietitians?

MANNA's registered dietitian nutritionists (RDNs) are licensed in the state of Pennsylvania. They provide personalized nutrition counseling, including but not limited to the following:

- Diet and nutrition recommendations as part of treatment for a medical diagnosis
- Unintentional gain or loss of weight
- Nutrition-related side effects from medications
- Nutrition for wound healing
- Making healthy food choices on a budget
- Controlling high blood pressure
- Blood sugar control

Can an institution with multiple locations conduct the study as one institution?

Yes, an institution with multiple locations can conduct a study as one institution. However, only one pilot grant per research project will be awarded, regardless of the number of locations involved in the study. If different locations

are applying for separate projects, then and institution may submit multiple proposals.

**How will study personnel have access to relevant patient data?
E.g. food intake, compliance with treatment, etc.**

Applicants should design a pilot whereby all outcomes data collection and associated processes occur at the institution. All patient data, questionnaires, clinical assessments, etc. must be collected by the RFP recipient and the process for doing so must be explained in the proposal narrative.

Can MANNA share nutrient information for the various diet modifications?

Yes, general nutrient breakdowns for each of MANNA's diet modifications are available [here](#).

Is this the first time you are offering these pilot awards?

Yes, The MANNA Institute is able to offer this funding opportunity thanks to generous contributions made by the Founding Eight, whose names are listed [here](#).

Do all cancer patients receive shakes or other modifications if they do not want typical meals?

No. MANNA does not provide supplements, just the meals.

Can RFP recipients use a form that differs from MANNA's usual referral form to enroll study patients in MANNA's services?

Yes, if you would like to use a different form please include it as an attachment to your proposal. MANNA also has abbreviated forms for use with research partnerships.

Will pilot projects require IRB approval?

IRB approval should be obtained for any projects related to this RFP as per your institution's IRB guidelines. A plan for this process should be included in your methods section and is considered part of the 1-year timeframe described above.