

Request for Application – Duke Palliative Care Pilot Awards to Integrate Palliative Care into Duke Health

Duke Palliative Care’s long-term goal is to integrate the core principles of palliative care into the fabric of the health system and surrounding community. This means ensuring that those with serious illness and their loved ones receive excellent pain and symptom management, guidance with decision-making, high quality communication with providers, and emotional support. Growing evidence indicates that specialist palliative care can help to achieve these outcomes. However, specialist palliative care services cannot meet the growing needs of all patients facing serious illnesses, and their families.

Therefore, we want to develop effective, scalable tools and interventions that integrate core palliative care principles and skills into the fabric of health systems and communities. We think of this as a population-based approach to palliative care. (‘Population’ includes patients, families and providers within the Duke Health System, as well as members of the surrounding community). We are inviting investigators to propose projects that test new interventions that could be scalable across this population and beyond.

Duke Palliative Care will support two population-based pilot grants programs, and both will focus on one aspect of palliative care: communication and decision-making. We are concentrating our energy here because this is an aspect of palliative care that we believe is naturally suited to a population-based approach. It also is an area that plays to Duke’s strengths and the health system’s priorities.

Scope: Please consider communication and decision-making as broad categories inclusive of a range of interventions. For example projects might involve training providers in communication skills, a patient question prompt list to improve advanced care planning, improved communication about patient symptoms, or decision aids. Interventions may target patients, families or providers. If there are questions about appropriateness of project ideas, please contact Karen Steinhauser - information below. We will consider projects addressing the needs of those in the context of serious illness, including any age.

We’re looking for applications in two tracks. Applications should specify one track.

- 1) Pilot applications: This track is designed for researchers and clinicians with the experience and expertise to carry out a small-scale test of an intervention and to pursue external funding (e.g., NIH, VA, PCORI, or foundation) for a subsequent rigorous evaluation. For projects funded in this track, Duke Palliative Care will provide financial support and coordination and will facilitate the development of inter-professional teams.

Details: Applications should be approximately 2 pages in length and should describe:

- The specific palliative care need and background statement
- Project goals and objectives

- The project's primary target (i.e., patients and families, providers, health care system, or community) and brief description of participants
 - Intervention description
 - General methods
 - Potential collaborators
 - Plan linking pilot funds to future funding
 - Budget amount up to \$25,000, and one paragraph justification
- 2) New ideas: This track is intended for clinicians and other staff who have a promising idea but who may not have the expertise to create and test an intervention. For projects selected in this track, Duke Palliative Care will bring in necessary people and resources to create a compelling proposal to DIHI, and will partner with DIHI to find support.

Details: Applications should be no more than 1 page and should include:

- a patient story or case to illustrate the problem to be solved,
- a description of a new intervention that would improve care in that situation
- Potential collaborators (if known)
- Idea applications do not need to include an evaluation plan or a budget.

These projects and teams also will form the foundation for a larger Duke Endowment Grant Application. We expect the 1-year projects will yield:

- The test of a clinically relevant solution
- Pilot data for future larger grants mechanisms
- New collaborations

Please submit project descriptions to Karen Steinhauser (Karen.steinhauser@duke.edu) by August 31st). Award notifications will be made by early October. For additional information please contact Karen or David Casarett (david.casarett@duke.edu). Thank you!