

(4) Drawing study samples and program participant rosters from populations or areas that include individuals from minority backgrounds.

(5) Providing outreach to individuals with disabilities from minority backgrounds to ensure that they are aware of rehabilitation services, clinical care, or training offered by the project.

(6) Disseminating materials to or otherwise increasing the access to disability information among minority populations.

Priority

Background

This priority supports one DRRP on Research Infrastructure Capacity Building. This DRRP will improve the rehabilitation research infrastructure and rehabilitation services and outcomes for individuals with disabilities from minority populations. Minority population refers to specific race and ethnicity categories. The following race and ethnic categories are applicable for this priority: (1) American Indian or Alaska Native, (2) Asian, (3) Black or African American, (4) Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and (5) Hispanic or Latino. Definitions and further information about race and ethnic categories is available in the Office of Management and Budget Directive 15 at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/OMB/fedreg/ombdir15.html>.

Minority populations are among the fastest growing racial and ethnic groups in the United States. The U.S. Census Bureau predicts that the American Indian, Asian and Pacific Islander, Black, and Hispanic population will increase to 40 percent of the U.S. population by 2010 and 50 percent by 2050. Additionally, more than 32 million individuals in the U.S. speak a language other than English (latest figures available from the U.S. Census Bureau). Currently, about 10.4 percent of the U.S. population is foreign-born; by the year 2050, this figure is likely to rise to approximately 13.3 percent (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000).

Historically, disability disproportionately affects minority racial and ethnic populations. The changing demographic profile of the U.S. will potentially increase the demand for a disability and rehabilitation community that is better prepared to address the needs of a more ethnically, racially, culturally, and linguistically diverse population.

Language barriers and lack of understanding about cultural values and beliefs are challenges that may impact access to services, rehabilitation

outcomes, and research activities. Additionally, traditional theories and methodologies may ignore the unique characteristics and needs of minority populations and be ineffective for conducting research activities, disseminating research findings, and fostering the participation of minority racial and ethnic populations in research activities. Research activities are often challenged by methodological issues, particularly questions about the use of specific research approaches within certain cultural contexts.

NIDRR is interested in funding activities focused on high quality research that will assist with further development of the research infrastructure, particularly activities that expand research approaches for scientific inquiry of relevant variables to improve understanding of the needs of minority populations, including issues of race, ethnicity, and cultural context; improve our understanding about rehabilitation outcomes, and the disparate rate of disability in minority racial and ethnic populations; and assist with development of innovative methods for establishing collaborative research partnerships.

Proposed Priority—Research Infrastructure Capacity Building

The Assistant Secretary proposes to fund one DRRP that will focus on a research, development, and dissemination project on Research Infrastructure Capacity Building. The reference for this topic can be found in the Plan, Chapter 9, Capacity Building: Priorities in Capacity Building. In carrying out this purpose the DRRP must:

(1) Develop and evaluate an innovative method(s) for establishing long-term collaborative research partnerships, with an emphasis on relationships between minority entities, Indian tribes, and nonminority entities;

(2) Research, develop, and evaluate strategies to assess the efficacy of existing research theories, methodologies, and measures for studying and describing underrepresented individuals with disabilities from minority racial and ethnic populations and their needs;

(3) Research, identify and modify or develop, and evaluate scientifically valid measurement strategies and methodologies for research involving the study of underrepresented minority racial and ethnic populations; determine their efficacy; and examine the implications of introducing newly developed approaches designed specifically for the study of this population;

(4) Develop and evaluate research principles or standards for culturally appropriate and linguistically competent disability and rehabilitation research, and disseminate guidelines; and

(5) Develop, implement, and evaluate approaches for disseminating research findings, information about best practices for research involving underrepresented minority race and ethnic populations, and information about research collaboration.

In carrying out the purposes of the priority, the DRRP must:

- In the first three months of the grant, develop and implement a research partnership plan ensuring that all activities are predominantly focused on research infrastructure capacity building and provide for mutual benefit for each member of the partnership, including persons with disabilities or their representatives;

- In the first year of the grant, implement a plan to disseminate research results;

- In the third year of the grant, conduct a state-of-the-science conference focused on the funded area of research and related topics;

- In the fourth year of the grant, publish and disseminate a comprehensive report on the outcomes and proceedings of the conference;

- Demonstrate how the research project can transfer research findings to practical applications in planning, policy-making, program administration, and delivery of services to individuals with disabilities; and

- Conduct ongoing program evaluation and produce a closing report describing research outcomes, as they relate to the research goals and objectives, and future directions for research infrastructure development and capacity building.

Executive Order 12866

This notice of proposed priority has been reviewed in accordance with Executive Order 12866. Under the terms of the order, we have assessed the potential costs and benefits of this regulatory action.

The potential costs associated with the notice of proposed priority are those resulting from statutory requirements and those we have determined as necessary for administering this program effectively and efficiently.

In assessing the potential costs and benefits—both quantitative and qualitative—of this notice of proposed priority, we have determined that the benefits of the proposed priority justify the costs.