

diseases. This Center must identify, develop as appropriate, and evaluate devices and other technology that improve employment and community integration outcomes for this population of individuals with disabilities. The reference for this topic can be found in the Plan, Chapter 4, Health and Function: Research on Progressive and Degenerative Disease Rehabilitation.

(e) *Rehabilitation of Stroke Survivors*: This Center must conduct research to develop rehabilitation interventions that improve rehabilitation, employment, and community integration outcomes of stroke survivors, including young stroke survivors. Such interventions may include robotics, complementary alternative therapies, and universal design methodologies aimed at improving the utility of workplace tools and devices. This Center must explore the cost-effectiveness of stroke rehabilitation treatments, such as group model approaches. The reference for this topic can be found in the Plan, Chapter 4, Health and Function: Research on Trauma Rehabilitation.

(f) *Rehabilitation of Individuals with Arthritis*: This Center must address national goals to reduce pain and disability, improve physical fitness and quality of life, and promote independent living and community integration for persons with arthritis of all ages in the United States. This Center must research the benefits of exercise and physical fitness; home and community-based self-management programs; and technologies available to the broad populations of persons with arthritis in the environments where they live, learn, work, and play. The reference for this topic can be found in the Plan, Chapter 4, Health and Function: Research on Progressive and Degenerative Disease Rehabilitation.

(g) *Rehabilitation of Children with Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)*: This Center must identify, assess, and evaluate current and emerging rehabilitation needs for children and adolescents with TBI. In doing this, the Center must document patterns of recovery, determining the effectiveness of current outcome measures for this population. Of particular interest will be evaluation of interventions and technologies, including specialized support services, to assist families and caregivers with transition to the school and the community. This RRTC must identify or develop effective rehabilitation strategies to improve outcomes for children and adolescents with TBI at all stages of rehabilitation. The reference for this topic can be found in the Plan, Chapter 4, Health and

Function: Research on Trauma Rehabilitation.

(h) *Rehabilitation of Individuals with Multiple Sclerosis (MS)*: This Center must conduct research to maximize the participation of people with MS, including those with all levels of symptoms associated with the disease, at home, in the community, and while working or learning. In doing so, the Center must identify, develop as necessary, and evaluate interventions to enhance the independence of people with MS. Those interventions must include strategies and programs that address interactions between cognitive, psychosocial, sensory, mobility, and other manifestations of the disease across the lifespan. The Center must consider the role of assistive and universally designed technologies, strategic goals, and financial planning for persons with MS, and the role of caregivers throughout the disease course. The reference for this topic can be found in the Plan, Chapter 4, Health and Function: Research on Progressive and Degenerative Disease Rehabilitation.

Executive Order 12866

This notice of proposed priorities 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 priorities 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 priorities, we have determined that the benefits of the proposed priorities justify the costs.

Summary of potential costs and benefits: The potential cost associated with these proposed priorities is minimal while the benefits are significant. Grantees may anticipate costs associated with completing the application process in terms of staff time, copying, and mailing or delivery. The use of e-Application technology reduces mailing and copying costs significantly.

The benefits of the Rehabilitation Research and Training Center Program have been well established over the years in that similar projects have been completed. These proposed priorities will generate new knowledge through a research, dissemination, utilization,

training, and technical assistance projects.

The benefit of these proposed priorities and proposed applications and project requirements will be the establishment of a new RRTCs that generate, disseminate, and promote the use of new information that will improve the options for disabled individuals to perform regular activities in the community.

Applicable Program Regulations: 34 CFR part 350.

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(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: 84.133B, Rehabilitation Research and Training Center Program)

Program Authority: 29 U.S.C. 762(g) and 764(b)(2).

Dated: May 6, 2003.

Robert H. Pasternack,
Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services.

[FR Doc. 03-11626 Filed 5-8-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4000-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

RIN 1820 ZA17

National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research

AGENCY: Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice of proposed priorities.

SUMMARY: The Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services proposes priorities for one or more research projects under the Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects (DRRP) Program under the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR). The Assistant Secretary may use these