

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Interdisciplinary  
Nursing Quality  
Research Initiative

**Deadline: January 13, 2006**

THE ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON FOUNDATION®

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

### Purpose

The *Interdisciplinary Nursing Quality Research Initiative* (INQRI) will generate, disseminate and translate research to improve the quality of care provided in hospitals. It will support interdisciplinary teams of nurse scholars and scholars from other disciplines to address gaps in knowledge about the relationship between nursing and health care quality.

### Eligibility and Selection Criteria (page 6)

Only multidisciplinary teams with at least one scholar from nursing and at least one scholar from another discipline are eligible to apply. Preference will be given to applicants who are tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and are not private foundations as defined under Section 509(a). Proposals will be evaluated based on the selection criteria outlined on page 6.

### Total Awards

Up to seven two-year grants of up to \$300,000 will be awarded through this first round of funding in 2006.

### Deadlines

- **Jan. 13, 2006 (3:00 p.m. EST)**—Deadline for receipt of brief proposals.
- **April 19, 2006 (3:00 p.m. EDT)**—Deadline for receipt of full proposals.

### How to Apply

**This program will only accept proposals submitted online at <http://grantmaking.rwjf.org/nri>.**

For questions about the program or application process please contact:

INQRI Helpdesk  
(301) 571-8161  
[INQRIhelpdesk@constellagroup.com](mailto:INQRIhelpdesk@constellagroup.com)

[www.inqri.org](http://www.inqri.org)

## BACKGROUND

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) has long been committed to improving the quality of health and health care for all Americans. As a linchpin in the U.S. health care delivery system, nursing has been increasingly beset by critical shortages in nurse staffing, and must be committed to improving the quality of patient care and transforming the way care is delivered at the bedside. Although there is anecdotal evidence of the impact of nursing care on patient outcomes, and research that indicates a correlation between the two, there is limited rigorous research demonstrating causal relationships between the quality of nursing care and high-quality patient outcomes. Building and sharing the evidence in this area is central to RWJF's nursing objectives, which are currently focused on hospital nursing. The Foundation expects to build support for a new kind of hospital that reflects the needs and realities of the 21st century: a hospital where patient safety is assured, quality of care is paramount, efficiencies are maximized, and staff are engaged with and actively supported in their jobs. Ultimately, we aim to reduce the national shortage in nurse staffing and improve the quality of nursing care.

Accordingly, RWJF's *Interdisciplinary Nursing Quality Research Initiative* (INQRI), a \$10-million, 5-year program, is intended to generate, disseminate and translate knowledge related to nursing's contribution to improving the quality of patient care.

This is the first of a series of calls for proposals to begin building a strong evidence base documenting the relationship between nursing care and patient outcomes.

## THE PROGRAM

### Goals

The overall goals of INQRI are to advance understanding of:

- Nursing care processes, the nursing workforce and environment, and the impact of innovation on the quality of patient care.
- Structural, organizational and environmental factors that have a causal effect on the quality of nursing care in acute care settings.
- Accurate, useful, feasible measurement of the quality of nursing care.
- Methods to produce credible estimates of the improvements in nursing and patient outcomes that can be attributed to improvements in the nursing workplace and/or workforce.
- Challenges that affect the conduct of research related to the quality of nursing care.
- Facilitators and barriers to the successful adoption of research findings to improve nursing care by acute care settings and health care systems.

In this round, INQRI will award up to seven two-year grants of up to \$300,000 to support the investigation by interdisciplinary research teams of the relationships between nursing care and patient outcomes. **Proposals can be submitted in response to the specific topic areas outlined as follows, or can be investigator-initiated ideas that are consistent with the broader set of goals outlined above.** Funded investigators will participate in three meetings to facilitate cross-fertilization of ideas and methods, to acquire input from stakeholders, and to disseminate results. At the end of the two-year grant period, investigators will be required to produce results that can be shared in the form of a research synthesis and through targeted communications vehicles to inform decisions by policy-makers, hospital administrators and others.

### Topic Areas

1. *Identifying, developing and testing new measures to advance quality nursing research.* One factor that has slowed the development of research in nursing quality has been the lack of clinically and empirically robust measures of nursing quality and studies that link them causally to quality outcomes. We are particularly interested in supporting projects that identify, develop, test and use measures that capture nursing's contributions to improving the quality of care that patients receive. Priority areas include:
  - Rescuing
  - Care coordination
  - Pain management
  - Symptom management
  - Medication management
2. *Testing the effects of implementing the nursing-sensitive performance measures endorsed by the National Quality Forum (NQF).* The 15 indicators endorsed by NQF as of September 2004 (available at [www.qualityforum.org/tx/NCFINALpublic.pdf](http://www.qualityforum.org/tx/NCFINALpublic.pdf)) represent the first set of nationally standardized performance measures designed to assess how nurses in acute care settings contribute to health care quality, patient safety, and a professional and safe work environment. INQRI seeks proposals that assess the causal effects of the set or a subset of the NQF-endorsed nurse-sensitive measures on nursing and patient quality outcomes across diverse acute care settings. Studies that also examine both facilitators of the NQF measure set and existing barriers to their implementation are encouraged.

## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Only multidisciplinary teams with at least one scholar from nursing and at least one scholar from another discipline are eligible to apply. Preference will be given to applicants who are tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and are not private foundations as defined under Section 509(a).

## SELECTION CRITERIA

A review committee will evaluate brief and full proposals based on the following criteria:

- Significance of the nursing quality research question being examined.
- Timeliness of the project for affecting policy development or implementation.
- Innovativeness of the project.
- Quality and availability of the data to be used and the strength of the proposed methodology.
- Evidence of meaningful interdisciplinary collaboration.
- Demonstrated potential for translation of findings to a wider field.
- Demonstrated understanding of clinical practice.
- Rigor, feasibility and creativity of the empirical framework and analysis plan.
- Potential to produce new information that can improve the quality of care that nurses provide.
- Strength of plans for disseminating findings among key stakeholders in practice, research and policy.
- Applicants' expertise and qualifications for conducting the proposed research.
- Reasonableness of the work plan and budget for the proposed scope of work (All applicants are expected to conform to RWJF's indirect-cost policy.)

- Relevance and impact of the findings for both practice and policy. Because the focus of this program is the United States, studies of health care in other countries will be considered only to the extent that they may directly affect U.S. policy or practice.

All primary data collected under this program are subject to RWJF's general requirement for producing data sets for public use.

Brief proposals will be reviewed by a diverse group of researchers and stakeholders. Selected applicants will then be invited to submit full proposals for funding consideration.

## EVALUATION AND MONITORING

An independent research group selected and funded by RWJF may conduct an evaluation of the program. As a condition of accepting RWJF funds, grantees will be required to participate fully in the evaluation.

Grantees are expected to meet RWJF requirements for the submission of narrative and financial reports. Grantees are also required to submit periodic information as needed for overall project performance monitoring and management. Project directors may be asked to attend periodic meetings and give progress reports on their grants. At the close of each grant, the lead organization is expected to provide a written report on the project and its findings suitable for wide dissemination. Please note that a finding suggesting that a tested measure or concept is not sufficiently linked to nursing quality is a result equally important as one that discovers a valid indicator.

## USE OF GRANT FUNDS

Grant funds may be used for project staff salaries, consultant fees, data collection and analysis, meetings, supplies, project-related travel, and other direct project expenses, including a limited amount of equipment deemed essential to the project. In keeping with RWJF policy, grant funds may *not* be used to subsidize individuals for the costs of their health care, to support clinical trials of unapproved drugs or devices, to construct or renovate facilities, for lobbying, or as a substitute for funds currently being used for similar activities.

## HOW TO APPLY

**All proposals for this program must be submitted through the RWJF Grantmaking Online system.**

There are two stages in the competitive application process: (1) the submission of a brief proposal that will describe the project, and, *if invited*, (2) the submission of a full proposal and line-item budget for a grant.

Please go to <http://grantmaking.rwjf.org/nri> to submit your brief proposal.

### **Stage I: Brief Proposal**

Applicants must submit a brief proposal, which will describe the project and include a one-page preliminary budget.

### **Stage II: Full Proposal**

Successful Stage I applicants will be invited to submit a full proposal, accompanied by a budget and budget narrative.

All inquiries regarding the program, selection criteria or application requirements may be directed to:

INQRI Helpdesk  
10401 Fernwood Road, Suite 200  
Bethesda, Maryland 20817  
Phone: (301) 571-8161  
E-mail: [INQRHelpdesk@constellagroup.com](mailto:INQRHelpdesk@constellagroup.com)

RWJF does not provide individual critiques of proposals submitted. This program has an advisory committee that will make recommendations about grants to the Foundation staff. All grant decisions are made by RWJF.

## PROGRAM DIRECTION

Direction for this program is provided by Mary Naylor and Mark Pauly at the University of Pennsylvania and Lori Melichar at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Administrative support for the program is provided by:

Constella Group, Inc.  
10401 Fernwood Road, Suite 200  
Bethesda, MD 20817-1110

Responsible staff members at the University of Pennsylvania are:

- Mary Naylor, Ph.D., R.N., F.A.A.N., *Program Director*
- Mark Pauly, Ph.D., *Program Co-Director*

Responsible staff members at the Constella Group are:

- Laura Clarke, *Lead Project Manager*

Responsible staff members at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation are:

- Lori Melichar, Ph.D., *Program Officer*
- Susan Hassmiller, Ph.D., R.N., F.A.A.N., *Senior Program Officer*
- John Lumpkin, M.D., M.P.H., *Senior Vice President and Director, Health Care Group*
- Maureen Cozine, M.P.H., *Communications Officer*
- Catherine Malone, M.B.A., *Program Associate*
- Lois Shevlin, *Grants Administrator*

## TIMETABLE

January 13, 2006 (3:00 p.m. EST)

Deadline for receipt of brief proposals.\*

February 22, 2006

Applicants will be notified of invitation to submit a full proposal.

April 19, 2006 (3:00 p.m. EDT)

Deadline for submission of full proposals.

June 1, 2006

Grantees will be notified of funding decisions.

July 15, 2006

Research grants start.

*\* All proposals must be submitted through the RWJF Grantmaking Online system. All applicants should log in to the system and familiarize themselves with online submission requirements well before the final submission deadline. Program staff may not be able to assist all applicants in the final 24 hours before the submission deadline. Note that, in fairness to other applicants, the program will not accept late applications.*

## ABOUT RWJF

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation focuses on the pressing health and health care issues facing our country. As the nation's largest philanthropy devoted exclusively to improving the health and health care of all Americans, the Foundation works with a diverse group of organizations and individuals to identify solutions and achieve comprehensive, meaningful and timely change. The Foundation seeks to:

- Assure that all Americans have access to quality health care at reasonable cost.
- Improve the quality of care and support for people with chronic health conditions.
- Promote healthy communities and lifestyles.
- Reduce the personal, social and economic harm caused by substance abuse—tobacco, alcohol and illicit drugs.

For more than 30 years the Foundation has brought experience, commitment and a rigorous, balanced approach to the problems that affect the health and health care of those it serves. When it comes to helping Americans lead healthier lives and get the care they need, the Foundation expects to make a difference in your lifetime. For more information, visit [www.rwjf.org](http://www.rwjf.org).

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for proposals at: <http://subscribe.rwjf.org>**

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