Capabilities of the California Public Health Foundation

Introduction

The California Public Health Foundation is a non-profit public health research organization incorporated in 1964 to promote and assist in the training, educational and consultation services, development, maintenance and operation of the State of California Department of Health Services. In 1979, this purpose was expanded to include developing and increasing the health resources of the State of California by implementing and financing the conduct of studies and research into the causes, nature, prevention, and treatment of diseases, disorders and defects of importance to the public’s health, and studies and research into the organization and delivery of health services.

As an independent organization, the California Public Health Foundation permits health agencies to respond promptly to public health needs and to share in the benefits evolving from funds not readily available from local sources. The Foundation serves as a milieu for scientists engaged in health related research, training, and related activities in conjunction with the State to receive grants and contracts and initiate research in a timely fashion.

Organizational Resources

Most programs operated by the California Public Health Foundation are collaborative efforts carried out with the guidance and assistance of personnel from the California Department of Health Services (DHS). The Foundation’s most important resource is its access to this excellent scientific team of doctoral and graduate level personnel with national and international repute in the fields of virology, microbiology, chemistry, immunology, genetics, biochemistry, biophysics, epidemiology and the behavioral sciences. In addition to contributing staff to serve as Principal Investigators for extramural research projects, DHS also makes its laboratory and office facilities available to selected projects. The State’s laboratory facilities are among the best equipped in the nation, capable of a wide range of chemical, physical, and biological studies. The facilities of DHS serve as training centers in their respective disciplines: the laboratories and epidemiological units host scientists from all over the world, who come to study and observe procedures and methodology. Training is provided for postdoctoral fellows, as well as technicians to staff clinical and research laboratories throughout the State and the nation.
Research in Coxsackievirus Persistence, funded by the American Heart Association, is aimed at determining the role of persistent coxsackie B virus infection in heart disease and the role of the sex of the host and the immune system in viral persistence.

Arts and Crafts Hazards, funded by the California Department of Health Services, is developing criteria for assessing the hazard of art and craft materials for children and for determining the acceptability of products for student use in elementary schools.

Dietary and Cancer Control Objectives, sponsored by the National Cancer Institute, is developing a State cancer control plan and building State capacity to achieve specific dietary objectives to reduce cancer and other chronic diseases.

Immunologic and Virologic Research and Training Services, supported by the Immune Response Corporation, is assessing the safety of an inactivated HIV whole virus vaccine preparation.

Support to the Safe Drinking Water & Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986, sponsored by the State Department of Health Services, involves updating existing policies and guidelines to be used for assessing hazards and risks posed by cancer-causing substances and developing exposure criteria to determine action levels for carcinogens and reproductive toxicants.

Neural Tube Defects Prevention, funded by the National Institutes of Health, is exploring whether the use of folate supplements at the time of conception reduces the risk of neural tube defects in infants.

Infant Botulism Prevention Program, funded by the California Department of Health Services, is designing and preparing protocols for investigations of risk factors for, and prevention and pathogenesis of, infant botulism and related illnesses believed to be possible causes of sudden infant death syndrome.

Anticancer Retinoids Study, supported by the National Institutes of Health, is assessing the structure-activity relationships between retinoids and abnormal embryonic development and providing an understanding of the pathological effects of retinoids on mammalian embryonic development.
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