

**The Penn Mental Health AIDS Research Center (PMHARC)
Developmental Awards Program: 2019 Call for Pilot Concepts
Due: November 5, 2018**

The PMHARC seeks concepts for its pilot research program. This competitive program will select up to six projects with clear potential to lead to larger, funded research initiatives. Concepts will be evaluated for scientific merit, programmatic relevance, utilization of PMHARC Core services, feasibility for completion within one year, and likelihood that the work will lead to future NIH grant funding. Priority will be given to applications that are responsive to the research priorities of the PMHARC (<http://www.med.upenn.edu/pmharc>), the AIDS Program of the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) (<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/about/organization/dar/index.shtml>) and the NIH Office of AIDS Research (<https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-15-137.html>). Investigators whose concepts are selected will be asked to submit a full (5 page) application and detailed budget. Projects must include both established investigators and early career investigators. Research approaches may include small feasibility trials and secondary analysis of large data sets. Potential areas of research include:

- Treatment of psychiatric disorders among people living with HIV infection
- Research that explores the relationships between psychiatric disorder and co-occurring medical conditions among people living with HIV infection —metabolic syndrome, heart disease, diabetes, obesity, cancers, HCV, TB, pain, and substance use disorders (alcohol and drugs)
- Interventions/treatments of psychiatric conditions to improve adherence to ART or PrEP
- Research that links the effective treatment of mental illness to improvements in biological measures of health status in people living with HIV infection
- Research on the treatment of HAND (HIV-Associated Neurocognitive Disorders)
- Studies of interaction effects between psychiatric and antiretroviral medications
- Secondary analyses of datasets to improve understanding of relationships between psychiatric disorder, ART treatment engagement and adherence, PrEP
- Research that links the PMHARC research priorities to those of other Centers on campus

Use of the PMHARC data (core assessment battery) and specimen repository (serum, plasma, genomic DNA) from prior PMHARC studies is strongly encouraged (contact Chelsea Voytek chelseav@pennteam.upenn.edu for details).

Funding amount: \$25,000 plus support from PMHARC Cores. Additional funds (up to a total of \$40,000) may be requested for projects that link directly to PHMARC, NIMH, and OAR priorities. Funds may be used for personnel (including up to 10% of salary for senior investigator), supplies and/or equipment.

Core Utilization: Full use of appropriate PMHARC Core services is strongly encouraged and will be viewed as responsive to this announcement. Details can be found at: <http://www.med.upenn.edu/pmharc/cores.shtml>

PMHARC Core Assessments and Repository: All studies involving human subjects will be expected to utilize a core battery of clinical and lab assessments which, for most projects, will be completed by the Clinical Assessment Core and the Laboratory Biomarkers Core. All subjects will be offered participation in the PMHARC data and specimen repository.

Eligibility: All projects must be led by a member of the Penn Faculty (including Instructors). Post Docs and Senior Fellows at Penn are also eligible with a faculty sponsor.

Applications and Instructions: One-page concepts should include a brief statement of the problem, the hypotheses to be tested or questions to be explored, methods, sample size and the PMHARC, NIMH, or OAR priorities to be addressed. Please include a cover page listing principal and co-investigators, faculty status, departmental affiliation, and budget requested.

Submit by November 5, 2018 to: Chelsea Voytek, MPH at chelseav@pennteam.upenn.edu. For further information, please contact Dave Metzger, PhD, Director of Developmental Core at dsm@pennteam.upenn.edu.