Calgary Health Trust Newborn Health Program

Newborn-Maternal Heath Research Initiative

Call for proposals for a Team Grant

The Calgary Health Trust (CHT) is seeking to support a single Team Grant led by full-time faculty members based at the University of Calgary, ultimately aimed at reducing the rate of preterm births in the Calgary Zone. The Trust has committed up to $1 million/year for 5 years in support of this initiative, which will have a transformative impact on improving the health of Albertans and their families, delivering world-class health care in Alberta and enhancing the quality of life for our community.

This research funding opportunity addresses the critical need to develop innovative solutions to reduce the health care and societal burden of preterm births.

Calgary has a higher rate of premature births than most other centres in the country. Preterm infants have greatly increased risks of neurodevelopmental, physical and behavioural impairments. Whilst some risk factors for preterm birth are known, there remain gaps in our understanding of all of the factors that lead to premature labour. Some of the risk factors that contribute to preterm birth include previous preterm birth(s), the age of the mother, multiple gestations, and certain physical and medical conditions. Beyond these, there are lifestyle and social factors, notably a lack of social support, domestic violence and maternal stress that contribute to the magnitude of this problem. In the postnatal period, mothers of pre-term babies remain at a higher risk for early-onset chronic medical diseases and end-organ damage. Concomitantly, both parents endure fragmented newborn care, financial and emotional stress, and ultimately a higher incidence of mental health issues.

The CHT is seeking a research proposal that is outcome-focused. The results of this research are expected to lead to innovative solutions to prevent entry into the NICU, expedite earlier discharge from the NICU and limit future admissions to the NICU and their impact on families and the health system. As such, components of the proposal may relate to preconception, prenatal or postnatal periods.

The principles of this research activity are that it is novel, rigorous, collaborative, patient and family-focused, outcomes orientated and efficient (minimizing duplication where possible). Multidisciplinary research and the incorporation of technological innovations are strongly encouraged.

Engagement with the community is an important component of this research. Developing an integrated knowledge translation plan is an essential element of the research proposal.

The Maternal, Newborn, Child & Youth Strategic Clinical Network (MNCY SCN) of AHS are collaborating with this research initiative. This collaboration was fostered to take advantage of the unique opportunities for integrated knowledge translation, data acquisition and analysis and evaluation made possible through the SCN. Researchers are strongly encouraged to include the MNCY SCN during the development of their proposals.
The Team will have a nominated Principal Investigator who will lead or co-lead the Team. One or two additional co-leaders can be identified (to a maximum of three co-leaders). Others involved in the research can either be co-investigators or collaborators. Co-investigators must dedicate a reasonable degree of time proportionate to their project funding, complexity and duration. Collaborators can include people outside of the University and/or colleagues whose time commitment to the Team is small.

**The Grant**

The grant will consist of five parts. A one page summary and signature page, the research proposal, CVs of the Team leader(s) and co-investigators, a fully-justified detailed budget and an appendix which will include references for the research proposal, figures and brief figure legends, letters of support, etc.

All components of the grant must be submitted in 11 point Arial font, with 1 inch margins on all sides and numbered pages. The grant will be submitted as separate PDF files.

The outcomes-focused research proposal is a maximum of 17 pages, consisting of the body of the proposal (15 pages) and a knowledge translation (KT) plan (2 pages). The proposal can be structured as the Team sees fit, but must include clear timelines for the various activities outlined in the proposal and detailed milestones, as well as expected outcomes for each component of research activity. It is expected that the proposal will illustrate the synergies between Team members and how the projects outlined will build on and/or inform each other so that the proposal becomes greater than the sum of its parts.

The KT plan should be developed together with members of the community in order to maximize the impact of the Team’s efforts. The KT component of the budget should reflect the Team’s commitment to disseminate the results of the research as comprehensively as possible.

Team members should submit standard U of C format CV’s limited to no more than 20 pages each. PIs/Co-Investigators need CVs, but community partners/collaborators can just include a letter of support.

A 5 year budget is required. It is recognized that as the activities of the team will ramp up over time, expenditures in year 1 may be less than initially budgeted. However, for the purposes of budgeting please make each year about the same, as unused funds may be carried forward until final year of the grant. A no-cost extension of up to 6 months may be granted to use unspent funds at the end of the grant, depending on the Team’s progress. In the event that this extension is not granted, unspent funds will be returned to the CHT.

**Deadlines:**

The nominated PI is required to submit a summary of the grant and very brief biosketches of the team members (maximum 2 pages) and the names of 5-6 potential reviewers (individuals who are not in conflict of interest with the team members, and who could review the entire proposal). The summary document is only for the CHT to obtain the reviewers and is not expected to be the final grant summary. This document is required by 4.00 PM, **September 1, 2019**.

The deadline for submission of the full grant is 4.00 PM, Thursday **12th December 2019**.