

NJHealth Study – Guidelines for Collaborating Proposals

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Background. The NJHealth Study will provide a unique source of data for research on the relationships of interpersonal and socio-political stressors to health and wellbeing among diverse populations. The NJHealth Study has numerous strengths making it exceptionally well suited for developing highly significant and innovative research proposals addressing the priorities of multiple NIH institutes and other funding sources. To realize this potential, the NJHealth leadership team seeks to collaborate with investigators from Rutgers and other institutions on research proposals using NJHealth data to study issues of critical importance to improving population health.

The sustainability of the NJHealth Study depends on obtaining support from multiple, large grants, including NIH R01s and equivalent awards. The baseline round of NJHealth data collection is underway with support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences (RBHS), and the State of New Jersey. Future rounds of data collection will be shaped in part by the interests of collaborating investigators. Additional resources are needed to augment baseline data collection, support studies drawing on the initial round of data, and collect future rounds of data. This document provides guidelines for investigators wishing to use NJHealth data in their proposed research.

Criteria for Pursuing Collaborative Research Building on the NJHealth Study. Decisions to pursue collaborative proposals will be made jointly by the NJHealth leadership team and interested collaborating investigators and will be guided by the following principles:

- *Consistency with NJHealth Study Aims.* Only work consistent with the overall aims of the NJHealth Study that have a high likelihood of advancing knowledge related to population health and health equity will be considered. Studies that actively translate research to policy or practice are of high interest.
- *Contribution to Sustainability.* Only projects that contribute to the sustainability of the NJHealth Study will be considered. The scope and mechanisms of such contributions are described below.
- *Data Sharing.* New data collected in projects that are built on the NJHealth Study should be made available to other collaborating investigators to the maximum extent possible, consistent with funder and IRB guidance. Decisions about data sharing shall be made jointly by the collaborating project PIs and NJHealth leadership.

Guidelines for Collaborative Projects. The NJHealth leadership team will work with the leadership of prospective collaborative proposals to tailor arrangements that support the success of proposed projects

and contribute to NJHealth Study scientific development, core infrastructure, and sustainability. Collaboration agreements will be memorialized in writing.

- *Proposal Development.* Once study leadership and new proposal PI's determine whether a proposal concept is consistent with the principles outlined above. The collaborating PI will be responsible for proposal development. Administrative support for new proposals will be provided by the PIs home department/unit. The NJHealth Study team will contribute to proposal development and provide the PI with NJHealth-related proposal text, data for preliminary analyses, and other resources as needed. As scientifically appropriate, a member of the NJHealth Study leadership team will serve as project multiple PI (MPI) or co-investigator.
- *Expected Support for the NJHealth Study.* Each collaborative project will be expected to cover all incremental project costs (e.g., collecting new data from existing participants, recruiting and collecting data from new participants, new analysis of banked biomarker or DNA samples, purchase of data for linkage). In addition, proposals building on the NJHealth Study will contribute to supporting shared study infrastructure. Such contributions will be structured to comply with funder requirements and be consistent with proposed project goals. Such contributions will be commensurate with the extent to which a proposed project would use existing NJHealth data, require adding interview questions or other data collection in the baseline round of the study, rely on a new round(s) of data collection, and use other resources provided by the NJHealth team. We anticipate projects drawing on the study infrastructure will typically budget about 20% of proposed direct costs. Such budgeted contributions can be structured flexibly, in keeping with scientific goals and funder guidance, for example:
 - Data retrieval fees.
 - Support for new round(s) of data collection.
 - Funding for NJHealth co-investigator or staff time devoted to supporting core study functions.
- *Accommodation for Trainees, Early-Stage and New Investigators and Pilot Projects.* The NJHealth leadership team is committed to supporting the development of the next generation of faculty addressing important population health and health equity questions. Collaboration guidelines for pilot projects and projects led by trainees, early stage, new investigators are forthcoming.