

Recipient:

Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation

Project Name:

Native American and Rural Arthritis Research Center

Address:

825 NE 13th Street, Oklahoma City, OK 73104

Amount Requested:

\$406,860

Project Explanation:

Native Americans have the highest prevalence of arthritis and lower access to specialized care. Osteoarthritis is the most common form of arthritis and is the leading cause of chronic disability. Neither biomarkers nor disease modifying treatments exist.

OMRF requests support for the creation of the Native American and Rural Arthritis Research and Training Center to address these disparities. This request will support this initiative in several ways. First, facility renovations are needed to treat mobility challenged patients and facilitate telerheumatology outreach to tribal communities. Second, implementation of a radiology research center focused on arthritis will provide free imaging opportunities to tribal citizens, allowing for earlier detection of arthritis progression and need for more aggressive interventions. There are 39 federally recognized tribes in Oklahoma. This center will provide care options for tribal members in and outside of Oklahoma tribal jurisdictions. Third, this center will also serve as a research hub to develop and support Native American biomedical investigators focused on improving health equality for the tribal populations.

This project is a good use of taxpayer funds because it addresses significant health disparities that exist between America's Native American population and other population groups. Osteoarthritis is a chronic disease, which results in increased utilization of health care services and spending, both for the affected individual and for the federal government, which may provide services through Medicaid, the Indian Health Service, or Medicare. Diagnosing and addressing osteoarthritis in its early stages and employing robust, effective treatment options stands to lower federal health care spending in addition to improving patient outcomes among a historically disadvantaged population group experiencing disparate health outcomes and access to care.

TOM COLE

4TH DISTRICT, OKLAHOMA

DEPUTY WHIP

COMMITTEE ON RULES
RANKING REPUBLICAN

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
VICE RANKING REPUBLICAN

LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES,
EDUCATION AND RELATED AGENCIES –
RANKING REPUBLICAN

DEFENSE



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

April 28, 2021

PLEASE REPLY TO:

- 2207 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-6165
- 2424 SPRINGER DRIVE
SUITE 201
NORMAN, OK 73069
(405) 329-6500
- 711 SW D AVENUE
SUITE 201
LAWTON, OK 73501
(580) 357-2131
- SUGG CLINIC OFFICE BUILDING
100 EAST 13TH STREET, SUITE 213
ADA, OK 74820
(580) 436-5375

Dear Chair DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger:

I am requesting funding for a Native American and Rural Arthritis Research Center in fiscal year 2022. The entity to receive funding for this project is the Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation, located at 825 NE 13th Street, Oklahoma City, OK 73104. The funding would be used for the creation of the Native American and Rural Arthritis Research and Training Center to address the highest prevalence of arthritis and lower access to specialized care for Native American and rural communities.

I certify that neither I nor my immediate family has any financial interest in this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tom Cole", written over a horizontal line.

TOM COLE
Member of Congress