



REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF

**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**  
**US ARMY MEDICAL RESEARCH AND MATERIEL COMMAND**  
**1077 PATCHEL STREET**  
**FORT DETRICK MD 21702-5024**

June 6, 2011

Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs

Dear Advocacy Organization Leader:

We would like to request nominations from your organization for consumer representatives to participate on the Department of Defense (DOD) Gulf War Illness Research Program's (GWIRP) scientific peer review panels. We hope that your organization will participate in this worthwhile endeavor by identifying individuals to serve.

A nominee must be endorsed by your organization and be:

- A veteran or military personnel living with Gulf War Illness;
- An active participant in a Gulf War Illness-related organization (support, outreach, education, or advocacy);
- A high school graduate or equivalent;
- Able to read and write in English;
- Able to demonstrate an interest in extending their personal scientific knowledge;
- Willing and able to represent the views of their community rather than their personal perspective; and
- Able to have ready access to a computer with a connection to the Internet.

Please complete one nomination form (attachment) for each outstanding consumer you are nominating. Nominated individuals will be evaluated based on the extent of their participation in advocacy, commitment to learning about and sharing scientific and medical information, communication skills, participatory skills, and ability to represent their community's perspective. There is no limit to the number of members you may nominate from your organization; however, it is necessary that each letter sent in support of the candidate demonstrate the individual's strengths in the above areas.

Complete nomination packets must be received by **July 12, 2011**. Submit your application forms and accompanying materials to:

Gulf War Illness Research Program  
Consumer Reviewer Recruitment  
ATTN: Amy Klimas  
8490 Progress Drive, Suite 200  
Frederick, MD 21701  
Amy\_Klimas@sra.com

You may use either the attached nomination form, or download the nomination form through our Web site at <http://cdmrrp.army.mil/cwg/process.htm>. Please note the above address differs from the published address online. You may submit to either address.

We have included a brochure to post. Please review the attached materials or forward them to the appropriate consumer organization/support group leader as soon as possible. In addition, provide the nominated individuals with the information included in this mailing.

### ***The 2011 Gulf War Illness Research Program***

The GWIRP responded to issues voiced by Gulf War Illness advocates by emphasizing outcomes in the program's research vision and by involving consumer/advocates in scientific peer review and programmatic decision making. Selected consumers bring their community's perspective, experiences with treatment options, and a sense of urgency to the process of identifying effective treatments, improving definition and diagnosis, and better understanding of the pathobiology and symptoms of Gulf War Illness. Consumers underscore the need for good basic and clinical science, improved medical care, and enhanced quality of life.

Recently, Congress appropriated \$8 million for the FY 11 Gulf War Illness Research Program. This is the same funding appropriation as in FY10. You can view the list of those applications recommended to receive FY10 funds at the CDMRP Website at <http://cdmrp.army.mil/gwirp/awards/awards.shtml>. Research applications submitted for these approved funds go through a two-tier review process to identify the best research applications. In the first tier, applications are reviewed for scientific merit and impact through a process known as peer review. In the second tier, applications identified as having the greatest merit during peer review are evaluated for programmatic relevance during a process called programmatic review.

We are recruiting consumer reviewers for peer review. Approximately 4 weeks before the peer review meeting, scientists and consumers will be assigned applications to review. Scientist reviewers are required to develop detailed written comments on each assigned proposal's feasibility, trial design, impact, etc. Consumer reviewers focus their written reviews on the significance of the proposed work as it relates to improved medical care, enhanced quality of life, and increased survival. Preparation time of consumer reviews is estimated to be at least 5 days.

### ***The Peer Review Meeting***

Panels are assembled for formal discussions of the applications, at which time scientists and consumers present their comments orally. Following deliberation, the panel scores the merit of each application. For the FY11 Gulf War Illness Research Program, the next peer review committee meetings are tentatively planned for October and will be held in the Washington, DC area pending Congressional budget approval. More specific dates will be provided when known. Travel, accommodations, meals, and an honorarium of \$1,250 will be provided to each consumer reviewer who participates in the full process.

The staff of the CDMRP Gulf War Illness Research Program is dedicated to involving consumers. The rapid return of your nomination materials will ensure full consumer participation in this process. For questions about the Gulf War Illness Research Program or the recruitment of consumer reviewers, you may contact Amy Klimas at 301-360-2150, extension 2188 or [cdmrp.consumers@amedd.army.mil](mailto:cdmrp.consumers@amedd.army.mil).

Sincerely,



Marielena McGuire, Ph.D.  
Chair, Consumer Working Group