

**SCIENTIFIC PEER REVIEW OF CONGRESSIONALLY DIRECTED MEDICAL
RESEARCH PROGRAMS' MELANOMA RESEARCH PROGRAM FOR THE
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE**

The Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs' (CDMRP), Melanoma Research Program (MRP) consumer advocate recently participated in the evaluation of research applications submitted to the MRP. Stacey Sepp was nominated for participation in the program by the Melanoma Research Foundation. As a consumer reviewer, Stacey was a full voting member, (along with prominent scientists) at meetings to help determine how the \$40 million appropriated by Congress for Fiscal Year 2022 will be spent on melanoma research.

Consumer reviewers are asked to represent the collective view of patients by preparing comments on the impact of the research on issues such as diagnosis, treatment, and quality of life. When commenting on serving as a consumer reviewer, Stacey Sepp said that "As a stage 4 melanoma survivor and patient, I am taken aback by the level of innovation, intellect, and commitment demonstrated by the CDMRP research grant applicants and my fellow review panelists throughout this process. There has been so much progress in the treatment landscape for melanoma patients over the last dozen or so years, and I am excited and humbled in knowing there is much more to come. It was a true honor to play a small role in the CDMRP review process. I am incredibly grateful to the Melanoma Research Foundation for nominating me and for the collective work of the entire melanoma community to continuing to give hope to everyone impacted by this disease."

Consumer advocates and scientists have worked together in this unique partnership to evaluate the merit of research applications since FY19. COL Sarah B. Goldman, Director of the CDMRP, expressed her appreciation for the consumer advocates' hard work. "Integrating consumer perspectives into our decision-making process brings energy and focus to our research programs. Patients, caregivers, family members, and advocates help us keep our efforts centered around what is truly important to those impacted. We very much value this critical input from our consumers who help ensure that CDMRP's work remains critical and relevant," she said.

Researchers applying to the MRP propose to prevent melanoma initiation and progression.

More information about the CDMRP MRP is available at the website:
<https://cdmrp.health.mil/MRP/default>.

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