



NIDCR’s Role in the Nation’s Fight Against COVID-19

The global COVID-19 pandemic is a reminder of the crucial role that biomedical and public health research play in society. Further, the public health crisis has underscored the complementary nature of research; an advancement in one field of research can have benefits in another.

NIDCR Joins Federal Research Entities in Prioritizing SARS-Cov-2 Research

The National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR)—the largest institution dedicated exclusively to research to improve dental, oral and craniofacial (skull and face) health—is one of the NIH Institutes that has quickly shifted focus over the past year to respond to COVID-19 through research.

To date, NIDCR has funded approximately **\$3.9 million of immediate and high impact research to protect and ensure the safety of personnel and patients in dental practices during the COVID-19 pandemic**, and the Institute will soon release a second round of funding related to COVID-19. NIDCR is contributing to the knowledge base on COVID-19 by providing supplemental funding support to current grantees for studies on COVID-19 and is supporting grants as part of NIH’s Rapid Acceleration of Diagnostics Radical (RADx-rad) initiative.

Rapid Funding for COVID-19 Research	NIDCR-Supported RADx Awards
<p>These research projects, funded through NIDCR’s extramural programs, seek to address critical needs and range from basic to clinical research studies. Study topics funded through NIDCR’s extramural research portfolio include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Personal protective equipment use in dental settings - Aerosol and droplet transmission in dental settings - Acceptance and usability of teledentistry - Sensors to detect SARS-CoV-2 in saliva <p>Many of these studies are conducted through the National Dental Practice-Based Research Network, a group of practicing dentists who conduct impactful research in oral health.</p>	<p>NIH’s RADx program encourages development of non-traditional approaches to address gaps in COVID-19 testing and surveillance.</p> <p>NIDCR has supported grants through the RADx program, and those projects will explore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Methods of detecting SARS-CoV-2 in saliva, including a “smart mask” that changes color when exposed to the virus - Grants to small businesses to develop methods to rapidly and affordably detect SARS-CoV-2, such as through a breathalyzer <p>These projects have the potential to improve both point-of-care and over-the-counter testing capacity for COVID-19 and further enhance the nation’s COVID-19 tracking capabilities.</p>

More information can be found at <https://www.nidcr.nih.gov/research/covid19>.

¹National Advisory Dental and Craniofacial Research Council - January 2021. National Institutes of Health, 2021. <https://videocast.nih.gov/watch=38984>.



Needs for Fiscal Year 2022

The COVID-19 crisis is placing enormous strain on the nation's research enterprise. To help mitigate the impact of this pandemic on the nation's research infrastructure, the nation's federal research agencies—including but not limited to NIDCR—need funding for COVID-19-related expenses both to support research that was interrupted by the pandemic and to supplement research on COVID-19 itself. The Research Investment to Spark the Economy (RISE) Act (H.R. 968/S. 289) authorizes a \$10 billion investment in the NIH to facilitate the resumption of research that was halted by the pandemic. These resources will allow for the recovery of pre-pandemic research and support the next generation of scientists.

About AADR

AADR, headquartered in Alexandria, VA, is a nonprofit organization with more than 3,100 members in the United States. Its mission is to (1) advance research and increase knowledge for the improvement of oral health; (2) support and represent the oral health research community; and (3) facilitate the communication and application of research findings. The AADR is the largest Division of the International Association for Dental Research (IADR). Learn more about AADR online at iadr.org/AADR/About-Us.

