May 6, 2024

Dear Chair Heinrich, Chair Harris, Ranking Member Hoeven, and Ranking Member Bishop:

As you begin to consider funding priorities for Fiscal Year 2025, we urge you to fund the Pediatric Device Consortia (PDC) Grant Program at the Office of Orphan Products Development (OOPD) at the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) at $7 million in Fiscal Year 2025. To address the need for improved pediatric medical devices, Congress created the PDC Program and has renewed it since its inception in 2007. The PDC Program provides grants to non-profit pediatric medical device consortia, which assist scientists and innovators, particularly small businesses, with technical and financial resources to improve the number of medical devices available to children.

Medical devices for children often lag five to ten years behind those for adults. Pediatric populations pose significant challenges for device manufacturers as there are many factors that limit children’s access to safe and effective medical devices, including differences in size, weight, and metabolism rate. Often, a pediatric surgeon, pediatrician, or a scientist has an idea for a new or improved pediatric medical device. However, being unfamiliar with the process of developing and seeking approval for a medical device, they may not know where to start. The PDC funded through this competitive grant program help connect these individuals to the support networks and resources they need to navigate the sometimes complex and lengthy medical device approval process.

Since their inception in 2009, the PDC have been remarkably successful. The five geographically dispersed consortia assisted with 647 pediatric medical device products in the past year. Most of the devices supported by the consortia are in the early stages of development, including concept formation, prototyping, and preclinical (animal and bench testing) stages, however, 50 devices are now available to patients. As a direct result of their efforts in FY 2023, several devices have been cleared for use in children, including the Neoasis incubator-based active noise control ANNE One, and the Orchid Safety Release Valve.
Because of its innovative model for success, Congress’s investment in the PDC Grant Program has enabled the consortia to leverage FDA’s investment to raise more than $750 million since 2009 in federal and non-federal sources of funding to support advancement of, and research towards the consortia’s pediatric medical device projects.

Continued funding for the PDC program is necessary to improve device availability for children; we urge you to include $7 million for the PDC Grant Program in the FY 2025 Agriculture, Rural Development, and FDA appropriations bill. We thank you for your consideration of our request and look forward to working with you as the Fiscal Year 2025 Agriculture, Rural Development, and FDA appropriations process moves forward.

Sincerely,

AANS/CNS Section on Pediatric Neurological Surgery
AdvaMed
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Association of Neurological Surgeons
American Association of Orthopaedic Surgeons
American College of Surgeons
American Pediatric Surgical Association
American Society of Pediatric Nephrology
American Society of Pediatric Neurosurgeons
Children’s Hospital Association
Congress of Neurological Surgeons
Cook Medical
Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation
Family Voices
Green Sun Medical
National Association of Pediatric Nurses Practitioners
National Organization of Rare Disorders
The Pediatric Orthopaedic Society of North America (POSNA)
Scoliosis Research Society
The Society of Thoracic Surgeons