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14. ABSTRACT

Gulf War Illness (GWI) is a multi-symptom disorder with features characteristic of "sickness" behavior, a normal manifestation of an inflammatory response due to infection or injury, findings suggestive of a heightened or chronic neuroimmune/neuroinflammatory disorder. Our *overarching hypothesis is that exposure to GWI-relevant compounds lead to enhanced and/or prolonged expression of proinflammatory mediators in the brain.* Our overall objective is to establish a neuroinflammatory model of GWI-related exposures, to define the contribution of high physiological stress, and to assess the potential for current pharmacotherapy to ameliorate these effects. However, after lengthy discussion on how to set up a fiscal relationship between the performing organization (UIC) and collaborators at the CDC, USAMRMC contracting officials required that a CRADA be established. Due to the extended period necessary to put this agreement into place, work on the project has just begun.

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INTRODUCTION/BODY

Although the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) received notice of the GWIRP award in July, 2009, research collaborators (Drs. O'Callaghan and Miller) at CDC-NIOSH did not receive funding as subawardees on this grant until July 2010.

During the summer of 2009 prior to the award, the funding mechanism for CDC to obtain funds from UIC as subawardee was reviewed via e-mail/phone discussions with various contracting officials at USAMRMC per their requests. After exhaustive discussions with a number of these contracting officials at a variety of approval levels, arrangements were agreed upon by the involved parties prior to the GWIRP award being tendered to UIC.

In November, 2009 these arrangements were reviewed once again with grants administration officials at UIC through numerous conference calls involving financial management personnel at CDC-NIOSH, all in an effort to transfer funds through the agreed upon mechanism. However, in a conference call on November 20, 2009 that again involved financial management personnel from CDC, UIC and the Contracting/Grant Officer from USAMRMC, project investigators were informed that the agreed upon funding mechanism between UIC and CDC-NIOSH must be replaced with a CRADA.

It then took several months to agree on the language in the CRADA, set up financial accounts once the agreement was finalized, and deliver the first funding installment to the CDC-NIOSH investigators, which occurred in July, 2010. Thus, work on the project has now begun and is proceeding as planned. Since the award contained a supplies budget for UIC only in the second and third years of the project, work has not begun at that site.

Throughout this process project investigators have regularly updated James B. Phillips, Health Sciences Grant Manager, CDMRP, and Colonel Melissa Forsythe, GWIRP Manager, CDMRP on progress in reaching an agreement.