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Wilms Cancer Foundation Welcomes Restoration of $15 Million in U.S. Federal Kidney Cancer Research Funding

Foundation highlights the importance of sustained investment in kidney cancer research and its representation in the Department of Defense Kidney Cancer Research Program's scientific peer-review process.

WASHINGTON, DC - November 18, 2026 - The Wilms Cancer Foundation (WCF), an international charitable organisation dedicated to improving outcomes for children affected by Wilms tumor and other childhood kidney cancers, welcomes the restoration of **$15 million in federal funding for the United States Department of Defense (DoD) Kidney Cancer Research Program (KCRP)** under the Fiscal Year 2026 appropriations legislation.

The funding, signed into law on February 3, 2026, restores congressional support for the KCRP following the absence of programme funding in Fiscal Year 2025.

Although the $15 million allocation remains significantly below the previous annual funding level of $50 million highlighted by kidney cancer advocacy organisation KidneyCAN, its restoration represents an important development for the kidney cancer research community.

The Wilms Cancer Foundation has a direct interest in the programme through its representation in the KCRP's research review process, contributing the patient advocacy perspective to the evaluation of research proposals alongside scientific and medical experts.

The Foundation views the restoration of funding as an important opportunity to support innovative research while reinforcing the need for sustained investment in kidney cancer research across the wider patient community.

Restoring Federal Investment in Kidney Cancer Research

Established in 2017, the Kidney Cancer Research Program operates within the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs (CDMRP), a federal research funding framework supporting innovative scientific investigations into diseases and medical conditions affecting military personnel, veterans and the wider public.

Between Fiscal Years 2017 and 2024, the KCRP received approximately $285 million in congressional appropriations, supporting research intended to advance understanding, diagnosis and treatment of kidney cancer.

The programme has supported investigations across areas including cancer biology, therapeutic development, clinical research and other scientific approaches aimed at improving outcomes.

The absence of KCRP funding in FY2025 created uncertainty regarding the continuation of dedicated federal investment in kidney cancer research.

The restoration of $15 million for FY2026 therefore provides an important foundation for renewed research funding opportunities.

Nevertheless, the allocation remains 70% below the previously reported $50 million annual funding level, highlighting the continued challenges associated with maintaining consistent, long-term research investment.

Wilms Cancer Foundation's Role in Research Review

The Wilms Cancer Foundation's participation in the Kidney Cancer Research Program's review process reflects its commitment to ensuring that the perspectives of patients, families and caregivers are considered alongside scientific expertise when evaluating research.

The CDMRP incorporates consumer reviewers into its peer-review framework, recognising that individuals with lived experience of cancer and representatives of patient advocacy organisations can contribute valuable perspectives regarding the potential impact and relevance of proposed research.

Through its involvement in the KCRP review process, the Foundation brings a perspective informed by its international work with families affected by Wilms tumor and other childhood kidney cancers.

This participation helps strengthen the connection between scientific research priorities and the experiences of the communities that research ultimately seeks to benefit.

While the programme primarily addresses kidney cancer research more broadly, WCF's participation also provides an opportunity to contribute a perspective informed by the distinct challenges facing children and families affected by paediatric renal cancers.

The Foundation's involvement in research review does not imply that KCRP funding is specifically allocated to Wilms tumor research or that WCF independently determines funding awards.

Why Kidney Cancer Research Investment Matters to Children

Wilms tumor, also known as nephroblastoma, is the most common form of kidney cancer in children.

Although substantial progress has been made in the treatment of Wilms tumor, significant challenges remain, particularly for children with relapsed disease, treatment-resistant cancers and those facing long-term complications following intensive therapy.

Advances in cancer biology, molecular research, drug development and treatment technologies may provide opportunities to improve understanding of kidney cancers across different patient populations.

However, paediatric kidney cancers differ biologically and clinically from many adult kidney cancers, making dedicated childhood cancer research essential.

The Wilms Cancer Foundation believes that investment in kidney cancer research should be accompanied by continued recognition of the distinct needs of children, adolescents and long-term survivors.

Areas of particular importance include improving treatment outcomes for high-risk and relapsed disease, reducing treatment-related toxicity, advancing precision medicine and addressing the lifelong health consequences that can follow childhood cancer treatment.

Although the FY2026 KCRP appropriation does not guarantee funding for paediatric renal cancer research, the continuation of a dedicated kidney cancer research programme contributes to the wider scientific environment in which discoveries and collaborations may develop.

Recognising the Importance of Sustained Advocacy

The restoration of funding follows continued advocacy by kidney cancer organisations, researchers, patients and supporters seeking to maintain federal investment in kidney cancer research.

The Wilms Cancer Foundation recognises the work of organisations such as KidneyCAN and the wider kidney cancer advocacy community in highlighting the importance of research funding and communicating patient needs.

The Foundation also recognises the value of collaboration between organisations representing adult and paediatric kidney cancer communities.

Through shared advocacy, research engagement and international cooperation, these organisations can help strengthen awareness of kidney cancer research priorities and encourage greater recognition of unmet patient needs.

As a member of the International Kidney Cancer Coalition (IKCC), the Wilms Cancer Foundation supports international collaboration aimed at reducing the burden of kidney cancer and improving outcomes for affected patients and families.

Strengthening the Patient Voice in Scientific Research

Commenting on the restoration of funding, **TJ Hodgkinson, Founder and Chief Executive Officer of the Wilms Cancer Foundation**, said:

"The restoration of $15 million in funding for the Kidney Cancer Research Program is an important development for the wider kidney cancer community and for the researchers working to improve patient outcomes.

"Although the funding remains substantially below previous levels, its restoration provides an opportunity to continue supporting innovative scientific research and reinforces the importance of sustained investment in this field.

"The Wilms Cancer Foundation is particularly pleased to contribute to the Kidney Cancer Research Program's review process, where patient advocacy perspectives can help inform the evaluation of research alongside scientific and medical expertise.

"As an organisation dedicated specifically to childhood kidney cancer, we believe it is important that the experiences and needs of children, survivors and their families remain part of the broader conversation surrounding kidney cancer research.

"Scientific progress depends not only on innovation and discovery, but also on ensuring that research remains connected to the people whose lives it is intended to improve.

"We welcome the restoration of this funding and look forward to continuing our contribution to the research review process and the wider international kidney cancer research community."

Supporting the Global Wilms Tumor Initiative™

The Foundation's participation in kidney cancer research review complements the objectives of its **Global Wilms Tumor Initiative™ (GWTI)**, an international programme focused on improving childhood kidney cancer awareness, education, advocacy, research communication and collaboration.

Through the GWTI, the Foundation works to strengthen connections between families, healthcare professionals, researchers, advocacy organisations and international institutions.

Engagement with scientific research programmes is an important part of this wider strategy, helping the Foundation remain connected to emerging developments and contribute patient-focused perspectives to research discussions.

The Foundation's international activities also support the broader objectives of improving access to reliable information, strengthening education and addressing disparities affecting children with kidney cancer.

Looking Ahead: Sustaining Progress in Kidney Cancer Research

The restoration of KCRP funding represents a positive development following the absence of a dedicated appropriation in FY2025.

However, maintaining progress in kidney cancer research requires consistent investment, collaboration and continued attention to unmet patient needs.

The Wilms Cancer Foundation will continue supporting research engagement, international collaboration and the inclusion of patient perspectives in scientific discussions.

Through its participation in the Kidney Cancer Research Program's review process and its wider international activities, the Foundation remains committed to contributing to efforts that advance scientific understanding and improve outcomes for people affected by kidney cancer.

For children affected by Wilms tumor and other paediatric renal cancers, sustained research investment remains an important part of the longer-term effort to develop more effective, less toxic treatments and improve quality of life.

About the Kidney Cancer Research Program

The Kidney Cancer Research Program (KCRP) was established in 2017 through congressional appropriations and is administered through the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs (CDMRP).

The programme supports innovative, high-impact kidney cancer research intended to advance scientific understanding and improve outcomes for people affected by the disease.

Its research evaluation framework incorporates scientific expertise and patient advocacy perspectives.

Website: https://cdmrp.health.mil/kcrp

About the Wilms Cancer Foundation

The **Wilms Cancer Foundation** is an international childhood kidney cancer organisation dedicated to improving awareness, education, support, research communication and global collaboration for children and families affected by Wilms tumor. Through the **Global Wilms Tumor Initiative™** and its international programmes, WCF works to expand access to trusted information, strengthen patient and caregiver education, support healthcare professional engagement and address inequalities in childhood kidney cancer outcomes worldwide.

Website: **www.WilmsFoundation.org**

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