How are Studies Funded?

Funding for veterinary research can range from small gifts to large federal grants. Faculty, along with residents, interns and veterinary students, typically apply for funds through a competitive grant process, wherein expert scientists review research proposals and select the ones that are most likely to advance animal health. Common funding sources include the American Kennel Club (AKC), the Morris Animal Foundation, the Veterinary Orthopedic Society, the SVM’s own Companion Animal Research Fund and even the National Institutes of Health. NIH sometimes funds research for diseases shared by humans and companion animals.

Ideas for research studies are generated through discussions in faculty labs, clinic rounds, scientific meetings and even over cups of coffee. The investigator then formulates a plan based on the goals of the study, including the right study design, type and number of patients to enroll and kind of tests to be performed. The Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) then objectively reviews the study plan to make sure all risks to animals are minimized. The IACUC assures compliance with all federal rules and regulations related to the use of animals in research. Prior to starting all veterinary studies, IACUC approval is required.

Upon approval from a funding agency and IACUC, the investigator moves forward with the study. If approval is denied, the proposal may be revised and resubmitted. Researchers spend a considerable amount of time writing and revising research proposals so they can do the work to advance animal health. For more information on clinical studies funding or other needs, visit the SVM website: vetmed.wisc.edu/research

Frequently Asked Questions

1. **What is a clinical study?**
Clinical studies involve researching new medications, treatments, tests or devices to determine if they improve patients’ health and well-being. Clinical studies may be called clinical trials or clinical research.

2. **How can my pet participate?**
All studies have specific criteria regarding species of animal, condition to be treated, current medications, etc. Information on the requirements for each study are included on our website. Check back often for new studies to open. Clinical studies are always voluntary. No animals are entered into a study without the full understanding and permission of the client.

3. **What are the benefits or risks?**
Patients participating in a study may receive treatments not available to the general population. A pet may or may not benefit from this, however, all studies advance scientific knowledge. New drugs and protocols may have side effects and studies may require more frequent visits to the UW Veterinary Care for recheck exams and laboratory tests. All studies are reviewed and require approval by the School of Veterinary Medicine’s Animal Care and Use Committee to assure minimal risk to the patient.

4. **What does it cost?**
The cost of participation varies with the individual study. Many studies are funded by grants that cover part or all of the treatment costs. All fees are discussed prior to a patient entering a study.

For information on all clinical studies, please visit: uwveterinarycare.wisc.edu/clinical studies