

Department of Radiation Oncology Monthly Research Update: January 2026

Pivot Strategic Investment Initiative

UMB leadership announced on January 16 that the University System of Maryland Board of Regents had granted approval to establish the Pivot Strategic Investment Initiative. Totaling up to \$33 million in research support over 2 years, this initiative aims to protect critical biomedical research while positioning UMB for continued growth in the current federal research funding environment. The initiative has 4 components: (1) ≤\$10 million in total funding to continue bridge funding in the UMSOM (started in 2025), offering support to individual investigators who have been negatively affected by changes in the federal funding landscape. (2) ≤\$12 million in total funding to support 5 programs that have been hard-hit by federal research cuts: Center for Vaccine Development and Global Health, Institute of Human Virology, Institute for Genome Sciences, Department of Epidemiology and Public Health, and Department of Microbiology and Immunology. (3) ≤\$6 million in total funding to support additional programmatic initiatives as departments, institutes, and centers across UMB pivot toward meritorious research ideas that align with current federal government research and development priorities or enable competition for nonfederal funding sponsors, such as private foundations or nonprofit organizations. (4) ≤\$5 million in total funding to strengthen infrastructure capabilities within UMB to allow investigators to compete for new and diverse sources of funding.

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JANUARY AT A GLANCE TOTALS

Clinical trials	
Total enrolled	32
GCC, other	7
NRG, co-ops	11
PCG, other registries	14
Grants and contracts	
New awards	0
Submitted	2
Articles published	8

Information for this monthly update should be provided no later than the second Wednesday of each month to Miek Segers at msegers@som.umaryland.edu. The update will be published on the second Friday of each month.

Have questions about identifying a funding source? Finding research partners across the UMB/UM campuses or at another university? Defining future research strategies? Or organizing your thoughts on (virtual) paper? Contact Nancy Knight, PhD, Director of Academic and Professional Development for the department, at nknight@umm.edu

Clinical Trial Enrollment

- 13 patients at MPTC on the **Proton Collaborative Group Registry**
- 1 patient at MPTC on the **Deep Thermal Therapy HUD**
- 1 patient at UMMC and 1 at Shore on **GCC 21136**: Phase 2 randomized total eradication of metastatic lesions following definitive radiation to the prostate in de novo oligometastatic prostate cancer (TERPS) trial
- 1 patient at Cap Region and 1 at BWMC on **NRG GU013**: The phase III 'High Five Trial' five fraction radiation for high-risk prostate cancer
- 1 patient at UMMC on **GCC 2380**: A single arm phase I-II trial evaluating selective adjuvant therapy for HPV-mediated oropharynx SCCs based on residual circulating tumor DNA (ctDNA) levels (SAVAL)
- 1 patient at UMMC on **NRG BN013**: Phase III trial of single fraction stereotactic radiosurgery (SRS) versus fractionated SRS (FSRS) for intact brain metastases
- 1 patient at BWMC on **NRG CC014**: Radiation therapy for high-risk asymptomatic bone metastases: A pragmatic multicenter randomized phase 3 clinical trial (PREEMPT)
- 4 patients at SJMC, 1 at UCH, and 1 at MPTC on **NRG CC015**: Harnessing e-mindfulness approaches for living after breast cancer-HEAL-ABC
- 1 patient at UMMC on **EA3191**: A phase II randomized trial of adjuvant therapy with pembrolizumab after resection of recurrent/second primary head and neck squamous cell carcinoma with high-risk features
- 1 patient at UMMC on **GCC 2422**: Phase I feasibility and pilot RCT of serious illness conversation guide in patient and intimate partner dyads living with advanced lung cancer
- 1 patient at MPTC on **GCC 2032**: Feasibility of strength training with androgen deprivation and proton therapy for high-risk prostate cancer
- 2 patients at MPTC on **GCC 2431**: A pilot study of systemic immune-based therapy combined with hyperthermia and spatially fractionated radiotherapy in advanced biliary tract cancer and hepatocellular carcinoma

Grants and Contracts

Submitted:

- **Hem Shukla, PhD, to the** Maryland Stem Cell Research Fund Launch Program for “Hypoxia-induced dysregulation of SOX2/PDX1 in mesenchymal stem cells in pancreas and study their role in malignant transformation employing MSCs and iPSCs organoids” (\$343,904).
- **Lei Ren, PhD, and Amit Sawant, PhD,** subrecipient MPIs with the University of Pennsylvania to NCI PAR-23-059 (P01) for “FLASH particle RT in mouse and canine models” (\$859,764).

Articles Published

Entered into PubMed January 8 through February 12. Titles link to PubMed abstracts.

1. Burmeister JW, **Biswal NC**, Harms J, Paxton AB, Boggula R. [Evaluation of medical physics resident well-being and satisfaction across multiple residency programs.](#) *J Appl Clin Med Phys.* 2026 Feb;27(2):e70475.
2. Jiang Z, Zhang Z, Xing L, **Ren L**, Dai X. [Foundation model-enhanced unsupervised 3D deformable medical image registration.](#) *Phys Med Biol.* 2026 Jan 21;71(2).
3. Paradis KC, Appelt AL, **Bentzen SM**, Chng N, Covington EL, Dawson LA, Gabryś D, Heron DE, Hoffmann L, Jackson A, Marks LB, Mayo C, Salerno KE, Simone CB 2nd, Xiao Y, Yorke E, Poortmans P, Buchsbaum JC. [Reirradiation Collaborative Group \(ReCOG\) consensus on standards for dose evaluation and reporting in patients with multiple courses of radiation therapy: an AAPM/ACRO/ASTRO/CARO/COMP/ CADRA/CPQR/ESTRO/NRG-endorsed consensus statement.](#) *Lancet Oncol.* 2026 Feb;27(2):e101-e110.
4. **Parchur AK**, Yadav P. [Editorial: Innovative approaches in precision radiation oncology.](#) *Front Med (Lausanne).* 2026 Jan 22;13:1776567.
5. Puckett LL, Apisarnthanarax S, Ballas LK, Chera BS, Chetty IJ, Dawes SL, DeMarco J, Eyler CE, Goodman KA, Jacqmin D, Katsoulakis E, Bang CK, Kujundzic K, **Nichols EM**, Pursley J, Rosu-Bubulac M, Simone CB 2nd, Xia P, Solanki AA. [Dose-volume histogram compendium of dose constraints for treatment planning: An ASTRO consensus paper.](#) *Pract Radiat Oncol.* 2026 Jan 21:S1879-8500(25)00305-4. Online ahead of print.
6. Tang C, Sherry AD, Hwang H, Farris DP, Francolini G, Di Cataldo V, Livi L, **Tran P**, ...Ost P. [Metastasis-directed therapy and standard of care versus standard of care for oligometastatic prostate cancer \(WOLVERINE\): a systematic review and individual patient data meta-analysis from the X-MET collaboration.](#) *Lancet Oncol.* 2026 Feb;27(2):181-190.
7. Tong JY, Bzhilyanskaya V, **Molitoris JK**, **Ferris MJ**, Mehra R, Moyer K, Wolf J, Taylor R, Hatten KM. [Does smoking influence outcomes in human papillomavirus-associated oropharyngeal cancer treated with transoral robotic surgery?](#) *Otolaryngol Head Neck Surg.* 2026 Jan 28. Online ahead of print.
8. Zhang Z, Guo D, Lu K, Jiang Z, Zhong H, Yin FF, **Ren L**, Yang Z. [PhysMorph: A biomechanical and image-guided deep learning framework for real-time multi-modal liver image registration.](#) *Phys Imaging Radiat Oncol.* 2026 Jan 18;37:100906.

Pivot Strategic Investment Initiative

(Continued from page 1) A significant portion of the funds will support UMSOM programs. Additional information is available at <https://www.medschool.umaryland.edu/research-funding-response/>. (SOM password may be needed for access) Submissions are on a rolling basis, and the system is open now. **Of special note: All proposals will go through a review and selection process before submission through the Chair. Our Executive Academic and Advisory Council will assist Dr. Regine in this screening effort.** If you plan a submission, please contact [Amit Sawant, PhD](#), or [Nancy Knight, PhD](#). No independent submissions will be accepted by UMSOM.

Important Dates for Upcoming Funding Submissions

Below is an updated calendar for remaining **Cycle 1 NIH Submission Deadlines for 2026**, with firm due dates for major standard NIH deadlines (RFA/PA dates may differ). Contact the Department Office of Research Administration (msegers@som.umaryland.edu) ASAP if you plan to submit a proposal, regardless of funder.

NIH deadline ⁴	DORA deadline ¹	ORA deadline ²	SPA deadline ³
R01 Mar 5 (new)	02/20/2026	02/24/2026	02/26/2026
*R21 Mar 16 (resub)	03/03/2026	03/05/2026	03/09/2026

¹DORA deadline: All forms to be included in proposal, known or in draft, budget final, subcontractor budgets and information final in final form, 9 business day prior to NIH deadline. ²ORA deadline: Personnel, effort, budget materials, performance site, and compliance forms routed in final form, 7 business days prior to NIH deadline. ³SPA deadline: All proposal materials routed in FINAL form by 5 pm, 5 business days prior to NIH deadline. No more corrections allowed, unless indicated after review by SPA. *R21 deadline is also for R03, R33, R21/R33, R34, R36, U34, UH2, UH3, and UH2/UH3 submissions.