

## Overview

Hidradenitis suppurativa (HS) is a devastating chronic inflammatory disease that manifests as recurrent painful nodules under the skin in the intertriginous areas of the body. It is associated with significant impacts on quality of life, psychosocial well-being, and long-term health outcomes of patients as well as consequences for families and caregivers. HS is prevalent, affecting between 1 and 4% of the population, and affects most patients in the prime of their life while also impacting many children. Despite the impact of HS, it remains underdiagnosed, undertreated, and understudied particularly in the pediatric and adolescent populations. Contributing to this dynamic are unknowns related to a complex disease etiology, stigma associated with HS symptoms (e.g., sweating, itching, and scarring commonly in the genital region), and limited treatment options to date with even fewer available for children under the age of 12.

While the physical symptoms of HS are well-documented, the mental health implications for children and adolescents—such as increased risks of depression, anxiety, and social isolation—remain underexplored. Research focused on this age group is essential to alleviate both the emotional distress and the physical burden of HS. The burden on these vulnerable populations is severe, the gravity of decisions regarding long-term disease progression and management significant, and the consequences of psychological and social impairment devastating.

To address these needs, the Pediatric Dermatology Research Alliance (PeDRA), HS Connect, and the HS Foundation are offering the 2025 Pediatric HS Challenge Grant with the focus on the mental health burden on the pediatric and/or adolescent HS patients.

## Focus

Proposals should address research questions that focus on the mental health burden of the pediatric and/or adolescent hidradenitis suppurativa. Proposals may be submitted by a single principal investigator or team of investigators, as they seek to build and sustain a larger scale research program within this critical field of study. Areas of interest within the primary focus include, but are not limited to:

- Understanding the quality of life and psychosocial impact HS has on patients, including self-esteem, body image, school attendance, academic performance, and bullying.
- Understanding the psychological and psychiatric comorbidities of HS and the prevalence/severity of depression, anxiety, and more.
- Understanding the impact of HS on family and caregivers.

Projects may be conducted in the areas of basic science, translational research, clinical research, epidemiology, or technology. Priority consideration will be given to projects led by early-to-mid career principal investigators who are part of multidisciplinary teams including researchers, clinicians, and patient stakeholders.

## Number of Awards

One (1) Challenge Grant is available for the 2025 funding cycle. This is a one-year non-renewable grant, with the earliest possible start date of January 1, 2026.

## Eligibility

Applicants need not be trained in pediatric dermatology but must hold the degree of MD and/or PhD (or equivalent) and be eligible to apply for grants under the guidelines of their host institution. Principal Investigators need not be United States citizens, and the research need not be conducted in the United States. Evidence of IRB or IACUC (or equivalent) approval is required for all studies when relevant.

## Application

Applications must be submitted via the application portal (<https://pedaresearch.org/pediatric-hs-challenge-grant/>):

1. Applicant and Team Information
2. Abstract (*250 word maximum*)
3. Layperson's Summary (*150 word maximum*)
4. Cover Letter (*2-page maximum*)
5. Project Proposal (*5-page maximum, not including references*) must include:
  - a. Specific Aims (*one page*)
  - b. Background and Rationale
  - c. Project Description
    - i. Methods and study/experimental design
    - ii. Primary and secondary outcome measures (*if applicable*)
    - iii. Statistical analysis
  - d. Potential pitfalls
6. Budget (*2-page maximum*) – Provide a detailed budget and brief justification that includes an explanation of any actual or anticipated overlapping funds and plans for support beyond the award period (*if applicable*)
7. Biosketches (*5-page maximum per biosketch*) – Provide NIH-style biosketches for the Principal Investigator and any Co-Investigators.
8. Letter(s) of support – (*Optional*) While not required, letters of support are recommended from Co-Investigators, key collaborators, and the chairperson of the Principal Investigator's department.

## Review

Applications will be reviewed by a team of peer reviewers based on criteria that includes the following:

1. Importance of Research
2. Rigor and Feasibility
3. Expertise and Resources
4. Strength of budget

## Award

Applicants may request up to **\$50,000 for one year. Direct costs only**. Award recipients are expected to actively engage with PeDRA's Acne and HS Focused Study Group, to share their project at the PeDRA Annual Conference, and are strongly encouraged to share results at the Symposium on HS Advances (SHSA). Travel support may be available to attend conferences to share results of this project. Applicants may request salary support as part of their budget and are encouraged to use budget to compensate support staff necessary for the efficient completion of the proposed research. Refer to [PeDRA's Grant Guidelines](#) for more information.

## Important Dates

Application deadline:	11:59 PM PT, Thursday, July 31, 2025
Awards made:	no later than October 15, 2025
Earliest start date:	January 1, 2026

## Questions

Email [research@pedaresearch.org](mailto:research@pedaresearch.org) for additional information or with any questions on the Challenge Grant, application, or review process.