

connections

directors' perspective

Three years ago, through a generous \$64 million National Institutes of Health Clinical and Translational Science Award, our local CTSC became part of something remarkable – the creation of an infrastructure that supports in the broadest sense the catalytic translation of information about human health to advanced patient care.

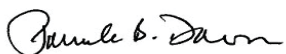
We've focused on developing practitioners, tools, and connections in the discipline of clinical and translational science, providing pilot funds for research, and helping to expedite the implementation of new discoveries in clinical practice. We've worked hard to provide clinical and translational researchers with supports and resources so they can work collaboratively to do good science.

Now, it is time to apply for renewal of this Award. With the help of many talented advisors at our partner institutions we are developing an informed strategy for that application's success. We want to assure northeast Ohio continues to capitalize on its solid research and academic strengths to benefit from the clinical and translational research process.


We are modifying internal processes and looking for innovative ways to strengthen all the essential core components of the CTSC (see casemed.case.edu/ctsc/cores) in the coming years. Within that effort, and as requested by the NCCR, we will increase our emphasis in the areas of informatics, education, pilot grants, and community engagement.

In the past three years, there has been a paradigm shift in research needs and priorities and how we address them. Successes are measurable, meaningful, and sometimes very dramatic -- one example is how the data from electronic medical records is being used to improve patient outcome.

In the past month, we have completed and implemented the first stage of the CTSC Membership database. If you are interested in research in human health; if you are a researcher from CWRU, Cleveland Clinic, MetroHealth, University Hospitals or the VA; or if you work on or fund research proposals or studies, we encourage you to join our initiative. Go to casemed.case.edu/ctsc/membership to explore the benefits of membership and complete the online registration form.



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core resources

A wide variety of professionals who hold primary positions at Case Western Reserve University, The Cleveland Clinic, MetroHealth, and University Hospitals, devote a portion of their time to the CTSC. Organized into twelve groups by their area of expertise or interest, these people are at the heart of the initiative. They:

- help design research studies and research tools
- facilitate clinical-investigator interfaces
- facilitate community outreach
- educate everyone involved
- administer and track all CTSC activities.

Featured Core: BERD

The Biostatistics, Epidemiology, Research Design (BERD) Core Resource is focused on assuring clinical and translational science projects are developed and implemented using effective design and analytical approaches. They provide an infrastructure of shared resources across the CTSC's Partner Institutions.

Researchers may seek expert assistance in quantitative and statistical analysis on study design and analysis plans, including novel statistical methodologies, for clinical and translational research projects. The core group can also help develop teams to provide added support in specialty approaches for your project. You may look to them for: collaborative assistance on biostatistical and epidemiological elements of research studies and assistance developing the design and analysis section of your proposal or grant application.

Gerald Beck is the Director of the CTSC BERD. To learn more about the specific resources managed at each location, explore their page on our website (casemed.case.edu/ctsc/cores/berd.cfm) including their recommended Quick Links. To access the services of the BERD Core Resource use the Request Management System (RMS) at casemed.case.edu/ctsc_rms. The RMS is your front door to all CTSC resources.

building collaborations

In keeping with our intent to grow a collaborative research enterprise in northeast Ohio, the CTSC has recently formed two significant pilot partnerships surrounding skin and stem cell research. Both of these areas of research have attracted the work of outstanding scientists and have been instrumental in developing new technologies and encouraging their timely transfer to the clinical setting.

First is an alliance between the Case Skin Disease Research Center (SDRC) which is affiliated with University Hospitals Health System and the CTSC's Core Resources Programs. The SDRC itself promotes cooperative interaction among investigators engaged directly in skin diseases research with those conducting state-of-the-art biomedical research in other disciplines that have relevance to the diagnosis, pathogenesis and treatment of skin diseases.

Second is an alliance with The Center for Stem Cell and Regenerative Medicine, a multi-institutional center composed of investigators from Case Western Reserve University, University Hospitals Case Medical Center, the Cleveland Clinic, Athersys, Inc., and Ohio State University and with a mission to utilize human stem cell and tissue engineering technologies to treat human disease.

The intent of these partnerships is to provide additional funding for innovative research programs, while at the same time leveraging CTSC resources in the support of clinical and translational research. We anticipate increased interest from high quality investigators and programs that focus on preclinical development and/or first in man studies of novel therapeutic agents, biomedical devices and diagnostics designed to address unmet clinical needs.

The CTSC's networking along these paths continues to expand our abilities to promote good clinical and translational research. One measure of our success is that in 2009, we reviewed 40 annual pilot proposals and 29 periodic pilot proposals; this grew to 77 annual and 51 periodic pilot proposals as well as 21 comparative effectiveness research (CER) infrastructure opportunity applications. We have initiated many funding collaborations and facilitated collaborative work with others, including:

- ResearchMatch
- REDCap/ REDCap Survey
- Evaluation of Social Network Solutions
- A "Front Door" monthly call with other CTSA members
- Physio MIMI collaborative supplement with University of Michigan and Marshfield Clinic – Wisconsin
- The Ohio Netwellness consortium
- Partnership with the Wallace Coulter Foundation.

ac-ro-nyms /ˈækrənɪm/ pronounced [ak-ruh-nim]

—noun 1. a word formed from the initial letters or groups of letters of words in a set phrase or series of words/ Love them or hate them, we use a lot of them. How well are they understood? Test yourself here and check out our online glossary at casemed.case.edu/ctsc/glossary for more.

1. TTR 2. TMR 3. CCI (answers to the right)

frequently asked questions

Q: How can I connect with volunteers for my approved clinical research protocol?

A: ResearchMatch.org is a content-rich, web-based recruitment registry connecting individuals who are interested in participating in research with researchers nationwide. It is an initiative of the NIH/ NCCR/CTSA with IRB oversight by Vanderbilt University. Researchers who are members of the CTSC are eligible to use ResearchMatch; any key study personnel authorized to recruit for a study can also register. Aggregate data from the registry may be used to investigate the feasibility of a specific research project and researchers can register their IRB approved protocol(s) and utilize the registry to search for eligible volunteers. Search criteria include location, demographics, health status, and medications for the more than 10,000 volunteers who have registered themselves at ResearchMatch. Visit our website at casemed.case.edu/ctsc/researchers/toolkit.cfm to learn more about this important resource.

ResearchMatch is facilitating researchers' connections to informed, willing research volunteers. As researchers focus on the clinical and translational science that can bring new medications or behavioral interventions to the people who need them, more such volunteers are needed. In an effort to increase the relevant literacy in the Cleveland community, the CTSC recently sponsored a clinical research education day through the Center for Information and Study on Clinical Research Participation (CISCRP). CISCRP is an independent non-profit organization dedicated to educating and empowering people to make informed decisions regarding participation in clinical research. Surveys have shown that even though 94 percent of the public recognizes that participation in clinical research is very important to advance medical science; 74 percent say they have no real knowledge of the clinical research process. In addition, 98 percent do not know where and how to identify and evaluate appropriate clinical studies for patients diagnosed with cancer and other chronic diseases.

Q: I have heard that the 2011 CTSC Annual Pilot Program deadline is now January 15 and not May 1. Fact or fiction?

A: The CTSC Annual Pilot Program is now a two-step process. Step 1 is to submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) as outlined in the RFA via the electronic system, WebGrants. This deadline is January 15, 2011 at 11:59 pm. Researchers whose proposals meet the requirements of the RFA and best reflect the goals of the CTSC Annual Pilot Grant Program will be invited to submit a full application (Step 2). Deadline for submission of the full application is March 15th, 11:59pm. Please note that IRB or IACUC approval is NOT required when submitting the LOI but IS required for the full application submission.

For details go to: casemed.case.edu/ctsc/researchers/funding_info.cfm?funding_id=8.

1. Translational Technology Resource, one of the core resource groups, focused on providing researchers tools to characterize their clinical populations, understand mechanisms of responses to clinical research interventions, and discover molecular mechanisms underlying disease. 2. Translational Methodologies Research, one of the core resource groups, focused on developing new methodologies and statistical analysis tools to solve problems lacking off-the-shelf solutions, apply to future research, and accelerate movement along the discovery pathway from laboratory to improved human health. 3. Center for Clinical Investigation, part of the Division of General Medical Sciences, CWRU School of Medicine, and the academic home of the CTSC (NCCR CTSA Award ULI-RR02498).