Clinical and Translational Science Awards Program

Catalyzing Innovation

Turning scientific discoveries into health benefits takes too long. To help get more treatments to more patients more quickly, the Clinical and Translational Science Awards (CTSA) Program supports an innovative national network of more than 50 medical research centers that work together to improve the translational research process.

Led by the National Institutes of Health’s National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences, the CTSA Program is designed to tackle system-wide scientific and operational problems to make the clinical and translational research enterprise more efficient. CTSA Program research centers serve as hubs locally and regionally to catalyze innovation in training, research tools and processes.

CTSA Program Hubs

CTSA Program hubs collaborate with each other to develop, demonstrate and disseminate innovative methods and technologies to turn scientific discoveries into clinical advances more efficiently.
CTSA Program Goals

- Train and cultivate the translational science workforce;
- Engage patients and communities in every phase of the translational process;
- Promote the integration of special and underserved populations in translational research across the human lifespan;
- Innovate processes to increase the quality and efficiency of translational research, particularly of multisite trials; and
- Advance the use of cutting-edge informatics.

CTSA Program in Action

- **Accrual to Clinical Trials (ACT)** to develop a nationwide network of sites that share electronic health record data to identify and enroll participants who meet criteria for a given clinical study. [ncats.nih.gov/pubs/features/ctsa-act](ncats.nih.gov/pubs/features/ctsa-act)
- **Collaborative Innovation Awards** that provide incentives for multiple CTSA Program sites to work together on translational research projects.
- **Recruitment Innovation Centers** to improve clinical trial participant retention rates and improve trial success.
- **REDCap**, an easy-to-use, freely available tool for clinical study management and data capture, enabling investigators to build and manage online surveys and databases. [project-redcap.org](project-redcap.org)
- **ResearchMatch**, a secure online volunteer recruitment registry that connects people who are trying to find research studies with researchers who are seeking people to participate in their research studies, including clinical trials. [researchmatch.org](researchmatch.org)
- **Scientific project review templates** designed to assure the scientific feasibility of human research protocols in addition to standard ethical and regulatory review.
- **Single institutional review board / IRBrely agreement** to streamline ethical review and oversight of clinical trials. [irbrely.org](irbrely.org)
- **Streamlined contracting** designed with government, industry and nonprofit partners to accelerate clinical trial start-up. [ara4us.org](ara4us.org)
- **Training** based on network-wide standards. [ctsa-gcp.org](ctsa-gcp.org)
- **Trial Innovation Centers** to facilitate multisite clinical trial implementation and improve its quality and efficiency.

*Translation* is the process of turning observations in the laboratory, clinic and community into interventions that improve the health of individuals and the public — from diagnostics and therapeutics to medical procedures and behavioral changes.

*Translational science* is the field of investigation focused on understanding the scientific and operational principles underlying each step of the translational process.