



Clinical and Translational Science Awards Program

Coordination, Communication, & Operations Support

CTSA Steering Committee Webinar Summary March 24, 2025; 2:30-3:30 PM ET

Steering Committee Attendees:

Michael Kurilla, Co-Chair
Ted Wun, Co-Chair
Steven Bernstein
Elmer Bernstam
Andrea Carnegie
Daniel Ford
Vesna Garovic

Michael Holinstat
David Ingbar
Mimi Kim
Michael Kurilla
Julie Lumeng
Grace McComsey

F. Gerald Moeller
Ruth O'Hara
Reynold Panettieri
Doris Rubio
Eric Vilain
Sarah Wiehe
Rosalind Wright

SC Regrets: Stephan Bour, Elizabeth Ofili, Steven Reis

NCATS Attendees:

Audie Atienza
Heather Baker
Kris Bough
Penny Burgoon
Dale Burwen
Jennie Conroy
Pablo Cure
Sarah Dunsmore

Stephanie Ezequiel
Josh Fessel
Stacia Fleischer
Gallya Gannot
Brittany Gibbons
Chris Hartshorn
Rebecca Katz
Francisco Leyva

Carol Merchant
Joan Nagel
Thomas Radman
Erica Rosemond
Joni Rutter
Yolana Vallejo
Robin Wagner
Annica Wayman

Invited Guests:

CCOS: Lauren Fitzharris, Kerry James, Cindy Mark

Welcome and Announcements (Slide 3)

Speakers: Michael Kurilla and Ted Wun

M. Kurilla welcomed members of the Steering Committee (SC), briefly reviewed the agenda, and facilitated the webinar.

Vote: Advancing D & I Working Group Extension (Slides 4-5)

Speakers: Cindy Mark

Presentation summary:

C. Mark shared with the Steering Committee (SC) a request from the Advancing Dissemination & Implementation (D&I) Working Group (WG) Team Leads to extend the WG's timeline for completing planned deliverables through December 2025 to ensure careful and thoughtful dissemination to a broader audience. She noted the WG's deliverables include a manuscript and a toolkit, and it is her impression from having attended some of the WG's meetings that they will complete them by the end of the extension period. After a brief discussion period (see below), she guided the team in voting on whether to approve a 6-month extension to the period of performance for the WG. Voting was anonymous via an [online poll](#), and the decision to approve the extension was unanimous. C. Mark will notify the WG of the approval.

Questions and Discussion:

- T. Wun noted there is no issue from a cost or bandwidth perspective.
- C. Mark noted an extension would not be detrimental to planned programming regarding opportunities for other WGs.
- M. Kurilla stated D&I is an area NCATS is promoting.
- V. Garovic commented D&I is something the SC should strongly support.

Engagement with State Government: Increasing Visibility and Support for Translational Science at State Levels, Followed by Discussion (Slides 6-16)

Speaker: Rey Panettieri

Presentation summary:

R. Panettieri reported on results of an informal survey conducted at the Rutgers University Pod's last meeting on best practices for engaging state government and increasing visibility and support for translational science at state levels. He explained reasoning behind efforts to engage state governments include the ability to establish new partnerships and acquire resources to support collaborations, increase awareness and support for translational science and the work of CTSA Hubs, extend CTSA problem-solving capabilities to support state health crises, and share established training and educational development platforms for translational research and science. Benefits of CTSA-state government interactions include opportunities in the realms of entrepreneurship and innovation, contract services, advocacy and policy development, leadership and advisory roles, workforce development, training and education, and participation in state-funded research.

He shared examples of ways in which members of the Pod have leveraged collaborations in all of these realms (see slides for details). He highlighted the example of [WISE Indiana](#), a partnership between the Indiana Clinical and Translational Sciences Institute's Monon Collaborative and the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA) that engages the state's nationally-recognized academic experts to evaluate and inform state practices, programs, and policies through the use of high-quality evidence-informed research. He noted a WISE Indiana collaboration between the CTSA and the state's Behavioral Health Commission calculated direct and indirect costs associated with untreated mental health and illness, which led to the passage of state legislation expanding access to mental health support and the establishment of a crisis hotline.

He concluded by noting survey summary results indicate CTSA Hubs have highly productive state collaborations across and within multiple domains, with education and training perhaps offering the greatest opportunity for greater collaborative efforts with state governments.

Questions and Discussion:

- E. Bernstam commented there are some restrictions on certain activities that might vary by state.
 - T. Wun agreed, noting California university employees cannot engage in advocacy work and only can contribute
- E. Vilain reported having close collaborations with his local public health department around rapid response for health emergencies in Orange County, California.
- D. Ingbar asked about the staffing involved in partnerships and whether they are typically postdocs or faculty.
 - R. Panettieri responded, noting it is both, though usually investigators.
 - D. Ingbar suggested R. Panettieri present at an upcoming Workforce Development Enterprise Committee (EC) meeting to obtain additional suggestions for collaboration opportunities.
- T. Wun stated workforce training resonates with state and local authorities, noting collaborations between local community colleges, the Sacramento Urban League, and the city of Sacramento.
- D. Ford noted the state of Maryland funds a program to improve smoking cessation for health systems in which Johns Hopkins is involved.
- M. Kurilla asked whether there is a difference between collaborations with local public health departments and state governments.
 - R. Panettieri commented their Pods' experiences have been wherever they had the opportunity to be most impactful. In New Jersey, it has been easier to work through the governor's office and the state's Department of Health and Human Services.
- M. Kurilla asked whether there were any unexpected engagement activities reported by Pod members.
 - R. Panettieri noted the degree and magnitude of engagement activities was most surprising.
- S. Wiehe mentioned Academy Health's national network, the [State-University Partnership Learning Network](#), lists the Indiana CTSI as an academic partner. It has an existing infrastructure for promoting learning opportunities and might be a useful resource. She also acknowledged the benefits of having standing contracts in place to allow for timely response, noting execution of contracting agreements can cause delays.

Pod Feedback (Slides 17-23)

Speaker: Chris Hartshorn

Presentation summary:

C. Hartshorn introduced Pod leaders, who summarized updates and feedback from respective Pods. The meeting slides summarized all updates, and information contained therein is shared below for Pod Leads not present at the meeting.

Dartmouth Clinical and Translational Science Institute Pod

- Steering Committee Pod Leader: Steven Bernstein
- Update Received: February 3, 2025
- Pod Summary: SC report out; discussed translational science (TS) versus translational research (TR) and ways to communicate differences to lay audiences and policymakers; Fall CTSA meeting; Dartmouth CTSA presentation

University of California Los Angeles Clinical and Translational Science Institute Pod

- Steering Committee Pod Leader: Arleen Brown
- Update Received: February 18, 2025
- Pod Summary: Discussed site updates on submissions, responses to reviews, and research performance progress report (RPPR) submissions; NIH updates; CTSA Spring meeting; CTSA Fall meeting planning; topics for future Pod meetings; translational science around wildfire response at UCLA

Conduits: Mount Sinai Health System Translational Science Hub Pod

- Steering Committee Pod Leader: Rosalind Wright
- Update Received: February 21, 2025
- Pod Summary: Mount Sinai EPIC implementation for research to stimulate discussion of best practices for using electronic health record systems; reviewed workflows of other CTSA; governance committee formed to address research workflow process and barriers; challenges of, barriers to use, and experiences with EPIC; challenges and best practices for implementing a CTMS at institutions; insights from Encore related to system integration difficulties and burdens on coordinators.

New Jersey Alliance for Clinical Translational Science: NJ ACTS Pod

- Steering Committee Pod Leader: Reynold Panettieri
- Update Received: February 25, 2025
- Pod Summary: Discussions on Hub engagements with state governments; NCATS data science versus informatics debate, NIH use of data science as a broader term encompassing informatics, and funding shifts affecting key infrastructure; career development for physician scientists, including institutional differences affecting outcomes, suggested needs for data analysis on career trajectories, and grant funding speed differences for K-12, K08, and K23 projects.

Mayo Clinic Center for Clinical and Translational Science Pod

- Steering Committee Pod Leader: Vesna Garovic
- Update Received: February 17, 2025
- Pod Summary: Introduction of new Pod members; topic ideas for CTSA Fall meeting, including topics needing to be addressed in coming years and CTSI community engagement
- Pod Feedback: More PI interaction is desired; Hub Administrators should attend; meeting format should be less formal

Wright Regional Center for Clinical and Translational Science Pod

- Steering Committee Pod Leader: Gerry Moeller
- Update Received: February 25, 2024
- Pod Summary: Discussions on potential unfunded mandates in CTSA data science efforts; NIH using N3C as a pilot model; changes in NIH grant review; Advisory Council meeting delays affecting grant approvals; Dr. Lucila Ohno-Machado introduced as new MPI for CTSA award; CTSA Spring meeting
- Pod Feedback: Request for clarification on Advisory Council delays and how it impacts funding decisions; need formal NIH response regarding policy shifts in grant applications.

Questions and Discussion:

- T. Wun suggested the use of electronic health record systems would be a good topic for ongoing discussion because it is relevant for many groups and systems integration is a challenge.
 - R. Panettieri agreed, noting success depends on the capabilities and knowledge of investigators and other involved staff who may need simpler interfaces.
 - E. Bernstam commented that if data is available in a structured form, there are simple tools, such as SQL, available. If data formats differ, more sophisticated tools may be needed.
- M. Kurilla asked for perceptions about deployment of artificial intelligence (AI) and its role in electronic health record systems.
 - R. Wright noted AI will play a role, regardless of associated challenges and uncertainty.
- Regarding grant funding differences for K programs and guidance surrounding changes to grants, M. Kurilla reported NCATS will soon have data and guidance to share for CTSA funding.
- D. Rubio and D. Ingbar noted challenges with K applications and grant funding differ by institution and are often dependent on decisions made by individual program officers.
 - V. Garovic noted her institution attempts to provide research protected time for trainees, which has been well received.

Adjourn (Slides 24-25)

Speakers: Michael Kurilla and Ted Wun

Presentation Summary:

M. Kurilla announced that due to a delay in obtaining NIH approval, NCATS is unfortunately having to cancel CTSA activities planned for the Spring meeting in conjunction with the Association for Clinical and Translational Science (ACTS). ACTS will still provide meeting rooms for any CTSA members who attend ACTS and want to gather informally. NCATS is investigating whether to include EC meetings at the Fall meeting instead. As a result, the next SC meeting will be held on Monday April 28, and the SC can discuss Fall meeting plans at that meeting.

M. Kurilla adjourned the meeting.

Next Steering Committee Webinar Monday, April 28, 2025, at 2:30-3:30 PM ET