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UMass Center for Clinical and Translational Science

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December 2020 Newsletter

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NEWS

The National COVID Cohort Collaborative (N3C): N3C is an NIH NCATS-sponsored analytics platform that contains clinical data from the electronic health records of people who were tested for the novel coronavirus or who have had related symptoms.

UMass Medical School was one of the first 12 vanguard sites to deposit COVID data to N3C. We are happy to announce that we have executed all the regulatory work required to facilitate access to N3C Data Enclave for our UMMS and Memorial investigators.

CTSA sites across the country are continuing to contribute data to N3C with the goal of creating a harmonized data set from all 60+ CTSA's. Currently, the N3C Data Enclave boasts upwards of 600K COVID related cohorts (>60K COVID positive data) from 15 sites. Access to de-identified or identified data sets is available: a) access to de-identified or safe harbor datasets does not require institutional IRB approval; and b) access to datasets with PHI requires institutional IRB approval. More information on the N3C Data Enclave is available at <https://ncats.nih.gov/n3c>. For any questions or assistance in gaining access to N3C Data Enclave, contact our UMCCTS - N3C admin, Mahesh Vangala

Mahesh.Vangala@umassmed.edu .



UMass Integrative Biomarker Center (InBioC) open for business: At the UMass Integrative Biomarker Center (InBioC), we look forward to working with investigators to provide relevant and timely proteomics or RNA measurements (i.e. microRNA, mRNA, etc) to support clinical projects for validation, preliminary data, grant submissions, etc. We do require that data generated as part of this initiative be made available to other investigators as part of a virtual data repository that will allow data sharing and/or reanalysis.

We will provide "Seed Money" along with support for investigators to generate data needed for programs, grants, and projects. Initially, these will be awarded in the range of 1-5K. Please see our webpage (<https://www.umassmed.edu/InBioC/>) to learn more.

COVID-19

Clinical Research Nurses Needed for RADx Studies: The Center for Advancing Point of Care Therapeutics (CAPCaT) has been designated as a national test center for the NIH Rapid Acceleration of Diagnostics (RADx) program. Our Center is looking for experienced clinical research nurses with an interest in working with people undergoing COVID-19 testing

to collect information and specimens in order to validate new and innovative test devices coming to UMass from around the world. The positions are available immediately. If you are interested or if you have any questions, please contact Danielle Howard (Danielle.howard@umassmed.edu) or apply at <https://www.ummsjobs.com/job/5416/> or <https://www.ummsjobs.com/job/5000/>

UMMS UPDATE regarding human subjects research during the COVID-19 pandemic can be found here: <https://umassmed.edu/ccts/covid-19/>. This website is updated frequently; last update Nov 25, 2020.

NIH UPDATE: For up-to-date NIH COVID-19 information, including informational videos, proposal submission and award management resources, human subjects and clinical trials guidance, animal welfare, frequently asked questions regarding flexibilities for grantees, and funding opportunities, click here: <https://www.nih.gov/health-information/coronavirus>

CLINICAL TRIALS DATABASE: To search for active Covid-19 clinical trials at UMMS, please visit <https://www.conqueringdiseases.org/>. Conquering Diseases is an easy to use web-based search tool to find, share and save clinical studies relevant to patients. It also provides educational resources to help patients and families learn about and find clinical studies. It provides a patient-friendly and direct way to learn about clinical studies and a secure environment to share clinical study opportunities and communicate with study staff for screening and enrollment into clinical studies.

THE NATIONAL COVID COHORT COLLABORATIVE (N3C): The National COVID Cohort Collaborative (N3C) Data Enclave is now open to scientists looking for evidence-based answers to COVID-19 research questions. This centralized and secure national data analytics platform is for COVID-19 research, including studying potential risk factors, protective factors and long-term health consequences, as the pandemic continues to evolve. Its data and analytics capabilities will grow over time. [Learn more about the N3C data](#) and [applying for access](#).

EVENTS

RADx Tech Webinar Series: University of Illinois' Multimodal Approach: Mitigation of SARS-CoV-2 Transmission at a Large Public University: Many universities have struggled to stop the spread of COVID-19 amongst their student populations leading to transmission into surrounding communities and cessation of in-person instruction. Here we report a multimodal "SHIELD: Target, Test, and Tell" program that mitigated the spread of COVID-19 at a large public university, prevented community transmission, and allowed in-person classes amidst the pandemic.

Time: December 8, 2020; 2:00-3:00PM

Registration link: <https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/su/48wMOzv/radxwebinarillinois>

COVID-19 Vaccines are Coming, Now What?: Scientists from the Massachusetts Consortium on Pathogen Readiness (MassCPR) will discuss and help make sense of the COVID-19 vaccine infodemic and map the challenges ahead with several vaccines nearing approval

A question-and-answer session will follow.

Speakers include: George Q. Daley, Dean, Harvard Medical School; Margaret Hamburg, Former Commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration; Bruce Walker, Phillip T. and Susan M. Ragon Professor of Medicine, Massachusetts General Hospital

Panelists include: Simone Wildes, Associate Director of Infectious Disease at South Shore Health, Clinical Assistant Professor of Medicine, Tufts Medical Center; Robert Finberg, Professor, University of Massachusetts Medical School; Larry Madoff, Medical Director, Bureau of Infectious Disease and Laboratory Sciences, Massachusetts Department of Public Health
Time: December 9th, 2020; 12:00-1:00PM

Registration link: https://harvard.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_6DDvCQqoSjeaYd0EGtxV3A

How to Utilize Real World Data to Support your Research and Clinical Trials: You are invited to attend two upcoming training webinars to learn how to utilize the TriNetX platform to conduct research and support clinical trials utilizing real-world data.

Presented by TriNetX

Basic Functionality Training: December 10, 2020, 8:00AM [Register](#)

Advanced Analytics Training: December 10, 2020, 10AM [Register](#)

Raising Funds-In the Virtual World: Whether you're pitching for dilutive or non-dilutive funding, to venture capital investors or to government funders, success can hinge upon your pitch. We gathered a group of experts including a startup who has successfully raised money, a venture investor and government funder who hear pitches from startups, and renowned communication expert, John Bates, who helps bring it all together. Following the panel discussion, for a pre-selected group of individuals, John will analyze 90 second pitches and provide live feedback so we all can learn.

Presented by Johnson and Johnson Innovation

Time: December 15, 2020, 1:00 PM.

Registration link: <https://raisingfundsinthevirtualworld.splashthat.com/>

M2D2 Barracuda Bowl Pitch-Off 2020: Watch unique startups pitch their medtech innovations to a panel of investors, and hear what they think about the technologies, development, and financial projection.

These innovative startups will present solutions for problems in post-surgical clinical monitoring, remote patient monitoring and alternative vaccine administration routes.

Time: December 15, 2020, 4:00PM

[Click here to register](#)

Intersections Science Fellows Symposium: The main goals of this cross-institutional symposium are to showcase the outstanding research of postdocs in the biological sciences, including those from backgrounds historically underrepresented in academia, and to support the scientific and professional development of the next generation of academic faculty. For more details, see the symposium website: <https://www.intersectionssciencefellows.com/> January 6-8, 2021

FUNDING

CCTS SPARK PROGRAM: Rolling application deadline. This program's priorities are to support studies that impact clinical care and research methodologies, support students/trainees, and provide access to funds to generate pilot and preliminary data for external grant submissions. For more information, click on this link:

<https://www.umassmed.edu/ccts/funding/spark-program/>

CCTS SMALL CONFERENCE GRANTS: Rolling application deadline. This funding facilitates the development of faculty-to-faculty networks within the University system. Click on this link for more information: <https://umassmed.edu/ccts/funding/small-conference-grants/>

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY: postdoctoral fellowships to prepare the next generation of scientists to conduct implementation research that addresses critical cancer prevention and control care delivery issues.

NCATS ASPIRE: Reduction-to-Practice Challenge: Opens 11/30. NCATS invites innovators and multi-expert teams to participate in the NCATS ASPIRE Reduction-to-Practice Challenge. The goal is the development of a platform that scientists can use to advance their translational science relevant to development and testing of new and safer treatments of pain, opioid use disorder and overdose. NCATS anticipates that this integrated platform ultimately can be generalized to address many of the roadblocks in automated chemistry. Stage 1 of the Reduction-to-Practice Challenge opens Nov. 30, 2020, and submissions are due by Feb. 28, 2021, at 5 p.m. EST. For more information visit

<https://ncats.nih.gov/aspire/2020Challenge>

Drug Development Collaboratory: The purpose of this Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) is to support intramural-extramural collaborations on late-stage translational science projects between NCATS Therapeutic Development Branch (TDB) and extramural researchers, for therapeutic development of small molecules, biologics, or gene therapies. The UG3 phase will provide support for late stage pre-clinical work and clinical trial planning that is conducted at applicant institutions. The goal of any collaboration with TDB is to enable an IND application by the end of the UG3 phase. If UG3 milestones are met and an IND is cleared, support may be provided for an early stage clinical trials in the UH3 phase that will be conducted at the applicant institutions.

Application due date: February 9, 2021

For more information visit: <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PAR-20-301.html>

Smart Health and Biomedical Research in the Era of Artificial Intelligence and Advanced Data Science (SCH): The purpose of this interagency program solicitation is to support the development of transformative high-risk, high-reward advances in computer and information science, engineering, mathematics, statistics, behavioral and/or cognitive research to address pressing questions in the biomedical and public health communities. Transformations hinge on scientific and engineering innovations by interdisciplinary teams that develop novel methods to intuitively and intelligently collect, sense, connect, analyze and interpret data from individuals, devices and systems to enable discovery and optimize health.

Solutions to these complex biomedical or public health problems demand the formation of interdisciplinary teams that are ready to address these issues, while advancing fundamental science and engineering.

Application due date: February 16, 2021

For more information visit: <https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2021/nsf21530/nsf21530.htm>

EDUCATION

Postdoctoral Training in Cancer Prevention and Control: The NCI-funded PRACCTIS program (Prevention and Control of Cancer: Training for Change in Individuals and Systems) at UMMS is now accepting applications for postdoctoral scholars to start January 2021 and August 2021. We train independent researchers to address critical prevention and control care delivery issues across the cancer continuum, including primary prevention, screening, diagnosis, treatment and survivorship, with emphasis on promoting change in individuals, providers and systems. Our faculty mentors are leaders in implementation science, health equity and low resource settings, health behavior change, health informatics, systems change and health policy, health communications, population health sciences, and prevention and intervention research. Applicants must plan to pursue an independent research career focused on cancer prevention and control, have earned a doctoral degree (PhD, ScD, MD, DO, etc.), and be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident. For more information contact Barbara Estabrook, Barbara.estabrook@umasmed.edu

Translational Science Interagency Fellowship: The Translational Science Interagency Fellowship (TSIF) is a new postdoctoral fellowship opportunity developed by the National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS) and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Fellows will be jointly mentored by NCATS and FDA scientists on a research project of mutual interest to both organizations. Fellows in this program will develop skills of value to future careers in academia, the pharmaceutical industry and government. Applicants must be US citizens or permanent residents and have two years or less of postdoctoral training. More information about potential projects, mentors, and the application process can be found at <https://ncats.nih.gov/training-education/training/TSIF>

Questions about the fellowship and application process are welcome. Please contact TSIFellowship@nih.gov (link sends e-mail)

DID YOU KNOW?

HRPP QA/QI: The Human Research Protection Program (HRPP) Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement (QA/QI) Program is a component of the UMass Center for Clinical and Translational Science. The program is independent of the IRB and helps study teams and investigators by conducting routine post-approval monitoring of on-going research to evaluate adherence with institutional requirements and federal regulations. If there are review findings, the QA/QI manager shares those findings with investigators and study teams, and provides direct education on the findings, including how to avoid making similar errors in the future. In

order to support improvement at an institutional level, the QA/QI manager shares aggregated data from reviews with the HRPP leadership and the Research Community to identify trends and target areas for education. The program also makes [self-evaluation tools](#) available to investigators and study teams seeking to perform their own assessments. To learn more about HRPP QA/QI HRP-142, visit: <https://www.umassmed.edu/globalassets/ccts/ccts-media/irb/updated-sops-2015/hrp-142-hrpp-qa-qi-program-final.pdf>.

NATIONAL CENTER FOR DATA TO HEALTH (CD2H): The goal of CD2H is to make data more meaningful, open and accessible. The CD2H supports a vibrant and evolving collaborative informative ecosystem for the CTSA program and beyond. The CD2H harnesses and expands an ecosystem for translational scientists to discover and share their software, data and other research resources within the CTSA program network. The CD2H also creates a social coding environment for translational science institutions, leveraging the community-driven DREAM challenges as a mechanism to stimulate innovation. To learn more, click [here](#).

SHARE YOUR SUCCESS STORY

Have you had *your research published* that cites the UMass Center for Clinical and Translational Science? Has *your patent been filed* on technology developed using Center funding or resources? Did your pilot project receive external grant funding? Share it with us at ccts@umassmed.edu. Sharing your success demonstrates the importance and effect of the Center for Clinical and Translational Science at UMass.

CITE & SUBMIT

Please cite the NIH CTSA award any time you use The UMMS Center for Clinical and Translational Science resources, services and facilities or received funding through the Center. ***“The project described is supported by the National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences, National Institutes of Health, through Grant UL1 TR001453, (or TL1 TR001454, or KL2 TR001455, as appropriate). The content is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the official views of the NIH.”***

Newsletter Submissions: *To be included in the CCTS Monthly Newsletter, please send announcements, including a link, to ccts@umassmed.edu. The newsletter is published the first week of each month.*

University of Massachusetts Center for Clinical and Translational Science, 55 Lake Avenue N, Worcester MA 01655