

CTSI Coordinator Connect

A product of the Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI) at the University of Pittsburgh



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RESEARCH RESOURCES | The Trial Innovation Network (TIN) Recruitment Toolbox and Educational Webinars

The Trial Innovation Network is a consortium of over 60 Clinical and Translational Science Awardee sites across the country; it aims to leverage and share resources across all participating sites to promote research and improve the quality and efficiency of research processes nationwide. The TIN compiled a publicly available collection of recruitment, retention, and engagement resources, known as the TIN Toolbox. The [Toolbox](#) is available at no cost to the Pitt research community.

The Toolbox contains many valuable resources, including but not limited to guides for community and provider engagement, a specialized COVID-19 recruitment and retention toolkit, guidelines, templates and examples for disseminating research findings, training for engaging underrepresented populations in research, electronic health record recruitment letter templates, and advice for using REDCap for e-consent.

The TIN also provides free, ongoing webinars on diverse research related topics. Past presentations have covered valuable topics like Recruitment and Engagement of Diverse Populations, Social Media for Recruitment and Retention, Implementing Your Research Project Within an Electronic Health Record System, and Empowering the Participant Voice. Previous presentations are recorded and [available](#) for viewing; upcoming events are listed on the TIN [website](#).

Locally, CTSI also offers a recruitment [playbook](#). The playbook provides an overview of many of the available resources commonly used in research recruitment and provides contact information for follow up and implementation. Any suggested additions to this local resource are welcome and can be sent to CTSI@pitt.edu.

TRIAL INNOVATION NETWORK



FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

[Early-Stage Medical Technology Research and Development Pilot Funding Program](#)

The University of Pittsburgh's Center for Medical Innovation (CMI) Pilot Funding Program supports research that aims to develop innovative new solutions to clinical problems with the objective of improving patient care through clinical/technical partnerships. CMI seeks projects that are in the early stages of development, with the goal of ultimately transitioning the work to further funding from other sources.

[Emergency Award: Social, Behavioral, and Economic Research on COVID-19 Consortium](#)

This National Institutes of Health (NIH) sponsored opportunity supports research that assesses the impact of SARS-CoV2 and related mitigation efforts on individuals and communities, and examines how economic disruption affects health-related outcomes, with a strong focus on the effects on underserved and vulnerable populations.

[Prevention of Perinatal Depression: Improving Intervention Delivery for At-Risk Individuals](#)

This National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) sponsored announcement provides support for clinical trials examining the effectiveness of perinatal depression interventions when implemented in settings where women receive perinatal care. Proposals should focus on practice-based research that tests preventive approaches that are sustainable in perinatal care settings. Proposals focusing on populations traditionally underrepresented in research are encouraged.

CTSI Updates | CTSI Announces COVID-19 Disparities Pilot Grant Program Award Winners

During the global pandemic, it has become apparent that COVID-19 has disproportionately affected communities who have traditionally been underrepresented in research. As part of CTSI's commitment to health equity, we recently awarded four \$25,000 grants to researchers who propose to identify and reduce disparities in the delivery of COVID-19 vaccines and therapeutics.

A look at the winning projects:

- **COVID-19 Vaccine Accessibility, Perceptions, and Attitudes in the LGBTQ+ Community, PI Tyler Traister, DNP, RN:** Recent research suggests that the LGBTQ+ community is more hesitant than the general population to receive the COVID -19 vaccine. The aims of this study are to examine perceptions and attitudes regarding the acceptability, accessibility and efficacy of the COVID-19 vaccine among community members who self-identify as LGBTQ+. The study hopes to increase rates of COVID-19 vaccination within LGBTQ+ communities by disseminating data to community organizations to inform responsive interventions.
- **SARS-CoV2 Vaccination in Pregnant and Lactating Women, PI Anne-Marie Rick, MD, MPH :** Pregnant and lactating women have been underrepresented in SARS-CoV2 vaccine trials, leading to disparities in vaccination rates for this group. This study will examine vaccine attitudes in this population, and address gaps in knowledge that drive vaccine disparities. Data will be collected and used to promote SARS-CoV2 vaccine equity among pregnant and lactating people.
- **Racial Inequalities in COVID Vaccine Uptake & Access, Co-PIs Ashley Hill DrPH, MPH, and Dara Mendez PhD, MPH:** This study will identify factors related to vaccine uptake and hesitancy, assess experiences of COVID-19 testing and vaccination among Black residents, and estimate COVID-19 testing and vaccination rates across Allegheny County and by race/ethnicity and over time. The results will inform local decision-making and address and prevent poor COVID-19 outcomes among historically oppressed populations.
- **Vaccine Equity for Immigrants of Color, PI Maya Ragavan, MD, MPH, MS:** Immigrant and refugee communities of color, especially those with limited English proficiency (IRC-LEP), have been disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. This study seeks to leverage the partnerships in place through the Pittsburgh Community Vaccine Collaborative, which is currently working to promote vaccine equity among communities of color, to focus on the unique needs of IRC-LEP communities.

For a more in-depth look at these innovative projects, visit the CTSI [website](#).

REGULATORY NOTES | Human Research Protection Office (HRPO) Issues Guidance Regarding Studies Released from Continuing Review

In case you missed it, in July, HRPO published the following guidance on their [website](#) regarding the review process for minimal risk, expedited studies:

Under the revised Common Rule, the IRB is permitted to release a study from continuing review if it is determined to be minimal risk and reviewed through an expedited mechanism. Study teams are still required to submit modifications, reportable new information, and a study closure. In order to keep PittPRO up to date, a reminder will be sent close to the anniversary of IRB approval. Upon receipt of the reminder, action may or may not be required:

- No action is required on your part if the study remains ongoing.
- A continuing review should be submitted to close out the study if it is completed.

Please contact us at askirb@pitt.edu with any questions

UPCOMING EVENTS

Tuesday, August 24 | 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

[Basic Biomedical Researcher Workshop](#)

Presented by the University of Pittsburgh Office of
Research Protections
Virtual event

Thursday, September 9 | noon to 1 p.m.

[Geographic Life Expectancy](#)

Presented by the University of Pittsburgh Clinical
and Translational Science Institute and the Urban
League of Greater Pittsburgh
Virtual event

Friday, September 24 | 9:45 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**[Review of Third-Party Research Risk: Is There a Role
for IRBs](#)**

Sponsored by Office for Human Research
Protections (OHRP)
Virtual event, no registration required

Recorded Webinar

[Plain Language Summaries of Publications \(PLSPs\):](#)

[What They Are and How to Create One](#)

Presented by the Center for Information and Study
on Clinical Research Participation (CISCRP)

Recorded Webinar

**[Recruitment and Engagement of Diverse
Populations](#)**

Presented by the Trial Innovation Network/
Vanderbilt University Medical Center

*CTSI's Responsible Conduct of Research Seminar
Series will return in September. Stay tuned to our
[website](#) for updates!*

DEAR CTSI,

Question: Our research team is planning to recruit participants in a clinic setting. Are we permitted to compensate clinic staff for referrals? We were also wondering about compensating study participants for referring friends and family to study staff, is this allowable?

Answer: The University of Pittsburgh Human Research Protection Office classifies these payments as finder's fees (clinician referrals) and recruitment incentives (participant referrals), and has regulations regarding both.

Finder's fees refers to paying clinicians (or research team members) to identify and refer potential participants. Direct payments for study referrals are prohibited because they have the potential to influence clinicians to pressure patients to take part in studies whether or not participation is in the patient's best interest. Undue influence needs to be avoided at all costs in order to protect participants' rights and welfare. Providing compensation that is not directly related to the costs of performing the study is also a violation of University policies on cost accounting for research and gives rise to a conflict of interest under FDA regulations. Clinicians may be compensated at fair market value for services performed as part of research procedures, like taking a medical history or performing a screening exam, but not for simply referring patients to a research study.

Recruitment incentives refers to the practice of compensating enrolled research participants who refer others to the research study. This is permissible so long as the incentive is not based on the whether or not the referred potential participant actually enrolls after learning more from the study team. Compensation is for the referral and not contingent upon enrollment or completion of the study. The original participant should be compensated even if the referred party declines to take part.

Further guidance can be found on the HRPO [website](#).

Readers, this space is reserved for your questions. If you have a research question you would like to ask, please send it to cliftons@pitt.edu and look for answers in our next edition

QUESTIONS FOR US?

We'd love to hear from you:
ctsi@pitt.edu

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