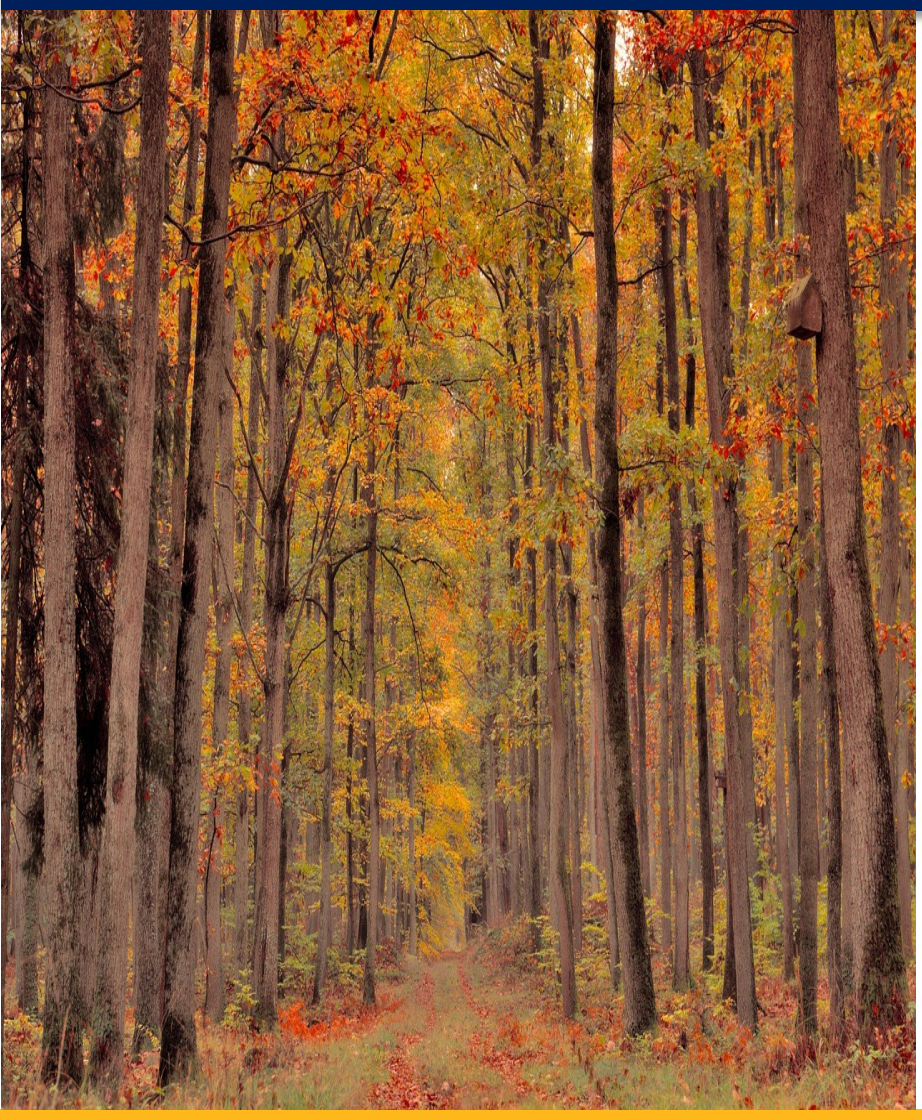
CTSI Coordinator Connect

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



IN THIS ISSUE

Issue 23, Fall 2025

RESEARCH RESOURCES:
Clinical and Translational Research Programs

The CTSI Clinical and Translational Research Programs (CTRPs) provide facilities, resources, recruitment assistance, and expert personnel to conduct clinical and translational research. Through the Clinical and Translational Research Centers (CTRCs) and Research Networks, investigators have access to inpatient and outpatient facilities, specialized staff, equipment, and laboratory testing. Spanning 11 unique programs, the CTRPs advance discovery, implement interventions, and engage populations in translational science.

The Children's Hospital Pediatric Clinical and Translational Research Center (P-CTRC) provides a controlled environment to conduct clinical and translational research on childhood diseases. The P-CTRC includes inpatient and outpatient facilities, as well as a specimen-processing laboratory. Statistical support is provided by the P-CTRC biostatistician, including consultation on experimental design, data analysis, and data management.

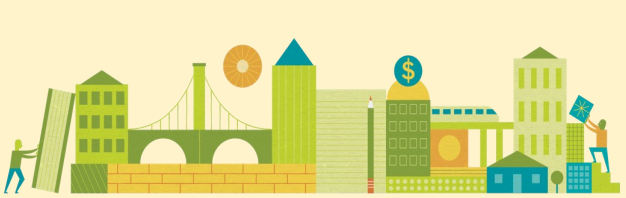
The Magee-Womens Hospital Clinical and Translational Research Center (MWH-CTRC) is an outpatient facility that supports clinical and translational research in women's health. Studies in the CTRC address sexually transmitted diseases, bariatric surgery, HIV-transmission prevention, contraception, reproductive endocrinology, pregnancy, preterm labor, preeclampsia, and infant outcomes related to medications and breastfeeding. The CTRC also facilitates newborn and infant research visits.

The Neuroscience Clinical and Translational Research Center (NCTRC) focuses on clinical and translational research in clinical neuroscience, psychiatric disorders, sleep, and circadian rhythms. The NCTRC provides infrastructure to conduct polysomnography (PSG) on a 24 hour basis. In addition, NCTRC facilities support lifespan research, with areas designated for adult sleep research as well as for studies in children and adolescents

The Physical Therapy Clinical and Translational Research Center (PT-CTRC) provides consistent, high quality physical-performance testing and rehabilitation intervention services to clinical and translational researchers. Staff consult and assist investigators with budget preparation for pre-award submissions, and letters of support and center resource descriptions.

The Montefiore Clinical and Translational Research Center (MUH-CTRC)) offers state-of-the-art infrastructure, including inpatient and outpatient facilities, specialized equipment, and specimen processing and shipping capabilities. Our experienced staff supports pilot studies as well as Phase I–III clinical trials. Our registered nurses are specially trained to administer investigational agents, including chemotherapy and immunotherapy, ensuring safe and compliant delivery of study treatments. The MUH-CTRC administrative team provides rigorous oversight of all studies and partners with investigators throughout the research lifecycle.

The University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute Clinical and Translational Research Center (UPCI-CTRC) provides the specialized, controlled environment essential for conducting high-quality clinical and translational cancer research. The unit employs nurses trained in early Phase I and Phase II clinical oncology protocols. Researchers have access to research laboratories, dieticians, skilled technicians, and administrative personnel to facilitate research and support clinical trials at the University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute.



The UPMC Competitive Medical Research Fund

The University of Pittsburgh Office of Research, Health Sciences (OORHS) is seeking applications for fiscal year 2027 grant support from the UPMC Competitive Medical Research Fund (CMRF).

These funds are used to support new investigators as they conduct the preliminary studies necessary to develop the hypotheses, preliminary data, and methods that support submission of highly competitive applications to extramural funding sources.

Deadline for submissions: January 12, 2026

Broad Pragmatic Studies

The Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) seeks to fund research study proposals that fill evidence gaps representing decisional dilemmas for various healthcare stakeholder groups, with a goal of generating evidence that helps patients and members of the broader healthcare community make informed decisions about their health care and health outcomes.

Applicants to this opportunity may select up to three topic themes within PCORI's research project agenda that best align with their proposed research. For this cycle, PCORI has also identified three special areas of emphasis: addressing obesity, treatments and strategies to address menopausal issues, and improving care delivery for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

This opportunity announcement will be released on December 02, 2025. A virtual Town Hall will be held on December 8, 2025.

CTSI UPDATES

Recharge Your Research

Join the CTSI research facilitator team the first Tuesday of each month from 1 to 2 p.m. for our "Recharge Your Research" series. Each session begins with a 30-minute presentation and Q&A on the featured topic, followed by 30 minutes of open discussion with CTSI facilitators. This is an opportunity to connect with other research staff members and CTSI facilitators to ask questions and to feel supported in your work. All research related faculty and staff are welcome to attend! Come for presentations and stay to discuss any research related questions after.

Next up on Recharge Your Research: join us on December 2, when our topic will be CTSI resources. CTSI offers many free services to the research community; we are here to advise on recruitment, regulatory, statistical, and community engagement issues, among other things! Join us to learn more.

Pitt+Me (PPM): Boost Your Recruitment

Pitt+Me is CTSI's free research registry, which currently has over 380,000 participants who are eager to volunteer for studies! Registrants for PPM receive regular emails regarding studies that may be of interest. Many participants sign up through UPMC, which provides access to medical records via an algorithm, meaning wen can target emails to the specific population you wish to recruit based on diagnosis codes. To date, PPM has referred over 430,748 potential participants to study teams. This service is free, and our screening office does a pre-screening based on inclusion/exclusion criteria so that study teams are not spending burdensome amounts of time screening ineligible participants. Please contact askppm@pitt.edu for more information.

Data Collection: Monitoring and Reporting

Research data must be constantly monitored and reported as it accrues. Join CTSI's Responsible Conduct of Research Series presentation on December 5th, where topics will include issues in quality control for completeness, correctness, and logical consistency; specimen tracking; reporting on data accrual; alerting appropriate parties about problems or exceptions; and modifying forms and underlying data mid-study as necessary.

REGULATORY NOTES

The National Institutes of Health recently issued a new policy aimed at enhancing security measures for human biospecimens; the definition of biospecimens includes tissue, blood, urine, and other materials derived from humans, as well as cell lines derived from human biospecimens that are generated after the policy's effective date of October 24, 2025.

Under the new requirements, biospecimens collected from participants in the U.S. which were obtained through NIH funding or are stored in repositories supported by NIH funds may not be distributed to institutions or parties located in "countries of concern," except under specific circumstances explicitly outlined in the policy.

No biospecimens or related materials should be shared with any external entity without a formal agreement in place, such as a Material Transfer Agreement (MTA) or purchase agreement.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Monday, December 1 | noon to 1 p.m.

Decentralized Trial Design

Presented by the Trial Innovation Network

Wednesday, December 3 | 11 a.m. to noon

When Seeing Isn't Believing: Identifying Visual Health Misinformation

Presented by the University of Pittsburgh Health Sciences Library System

Tuesday, December 9 | noon to 1 p.m.

Communicating Science

Presented by the CTSI Responsible Conduct of Research Center

Considerations for the Use of AI in Lay Summary Creation

Presented by the Center for Information and Study On Research Participation

Recorded Webinar

Wednesday, January 21 | noon to 1 p.m.

Fraud Prevention in Decentralized Trials

Presented by the Trial Innovation Network

Informed Consent: the Teach- Back Method

The teach-back method is an evidence-based health literacy intervention to improve patient-provider communication and health outcomes. The teach-back method involves asking participants to explain back, in their own words, important information about the study, like what the purpose of the research is, and what participation entails, while conducting an informed consent discussion. It helps ensure that the discussion is complete and comprehensive, and that the participant has a true understanding of the study. The Institute for Healthcare Advancement has identified several core teach-back principles:

- Ask the participant, in a caring way, to explain back using their own words. Do this after each "need-to-know" concept or "need-to-do" task rather than waiting until the end of the informed consent dialogue (this is referred to as "chunk and check")
- Use plain language
- Use words that show you are taking responsibility for being clear ("I just want to make sure I explained this well enough") so that participants don't feel they are being tested, grilled or put on the spot
- If the participant is not able to teach back accurately, explain in a different way and re-check
- Use reader-friendly plain language materials to support learning, sharing, and finding information
- Document use of and the person's response to teach-back

For more information, explore the Institute for Healthcare Advancement's teach-back toolkit.

Questions for us?

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

Pitt+Me questions: ASKPPM@pitt.edu

Pitt CTSI

Clinical and Translational Science Institute