

# 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 ENACT Network

The ENACT Network is a powerful national research platform designed to help investigators move faster from idea to study. Supported by the National Center for Advancing Translational Science (NCATS) and developed by institutions across the NIH Clinical and Translational Science Award (CTSA) consortium, ENACT gives researchers direct access to large-scale, real-world EHR data for rapid cohort discovery, feasibility analysis, and multi-site collaborations, streamlining study planning and strengthening proposals from the start.

At its core, the ENACT Network enables researchers, clinicians, and trainees at participating CTSA institutions to query de-identified EHR data from a network representing well over 140 million patients. Users can explore patient demographics, diagnoses, lab results, medications, and other key clinical attributes directly from their desktops to determine study feasibility, refine eligibility criteria, and identify potential partner sites for multi-site clinical studies, all while maintaining strict adherence to HIPAA and institutional privacy standards.

Unlike traditional centralized repositories, ENACT operates as a federated data system, meaning that patient data remains at local institutions. The network securely returns only aggregate cohort counts, protecting confidentiality while enabling powerful cross-institution insights.

Beyond cohort discovery, ENACT supports the development and validation of informatics tools and promotes high-quality data standards. Its infrastructure is robust, up-to-date, and continually enhanced with advanced analytics, machine learning tools, and new data elements added annually to meet evolving research needs.

Whether you're planning a grant application, preparing for IRB submission, or seeking clinical insights across large populations, ENACT is an essential resource for accelerating translational science and expanding the impact of EHR-based research nationwide.

For more information on how you can utilize ENACT for your next research study, email [ENACT@pitt.edu](mailto:ENACT@pitt.edu)



## FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

### [Phased Large Awards for Comparative Effectiveness Research \(PLACER\)](#)

The Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) intends to release a Phased Large Awards for Comparative Effectiveness Research (PLACER) PCORI Funding Announcement (PFA) on April 1, 2026, seeking to fund high-impact patient-centered comparative clinical effectiveness research (CER) projects. This preannouncement provides potential applicants additional time to identify collaborators, obtain patient and stakeholder input on potential studies, and develop responsive, high-quality applications.

PCORI seeks to fund patient-centered CER comparing two or more alternatives, each of which has robust evidence of efficacy and is in current use. If efficacy is not well established, then widespread use must be documented. PCORI is interested in research that aims to fill pertinent evidence gaps representing decisional dilemmas for patients, caregivers, clinicians, policymakers and other healthcare system stakeholders, with a goal of generating evidence that helps patients and members of the broader health and healthcare community make informed decisions about their health care and health outcomes. Clinical interventions (such as medications, diagnostic tests or procedures) and delivery system interventions (such as workforce, technologies or healthcare service delivery designs) are appropriate for these studies.

# 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.

Please [join us](#) on March 3, when our guest will be Soun Khountham, MS, MBA, CCRP Director, New Development at the Sponsored Clinical Trials & Partnerships (SCTP) Office, UPMC Enterprises, presenting Industry -Sponsored Clinical Trials Startup 101. This session will provide a practical overview of how industry-sponsored clinical trials are initiated within a large academic health system, from early feasibility and budgeting through contracts, IRB, and study activation. The goal is to help research staff understand common startup touchpoints, timelines, and where delays most often occur.

## Community Partner Research Ethics Training (CPRET 2.0)

The Community Partner Research Ethics Training (CPRET) has been refreshed to better support today's community-engaged research partnerships. CPRET 2.0 maintains its strong foundation in core research ethics: respect for persons, beneficence, and justice, while placing greater emphasis on clarity, real-world scenarios, and meaningful dialogue between researchers and community partners.

The revised materials offer clearer guidance for investigators, streamlined forms for community partners, and improved tools for tailoring training to specific studies. CPRET 2.0 supports ethical, respectful, and community-centered research by helping teams align expectations, strengthen communication, and prepare community partners for active roles on research teams. The training is designed to be flexible and study-specific, allowing investigators to focus on the ethical considerations most relevant to their work rather than a one-size-fits-all approach. Looking ahead, additional supports are being explored to strengthen CPRET implementation, including peer-informed resources such as examples from prior studies, shared tools, and opportunities for investigators with CPRET experience to support others interested in using the training. Together, these efforts aim to make CPRET a practical, adaptable resource that continues to evolve alongside the needs of community-engaged research. To learn more, contact [ctsi@pitt.edu](mailto:ctsi@pitt.edu).

## REGULATORY NOTES

The University of Pittsburgh implemented new [Research Misconduct Policy and Procedure](#), effective January 1, 2026. This policy affirms the University's responsibility to uphold research integrity in all scholarly endeavors. It outlines procedures for handling allegations of research misconduct, in accordance with the University's commitment to responsible research conduct and applicable federal regulations. Research misconduct is defined as fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism in proposing, performing, or reviewing research, or in reporting research results, when committed intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly.

The Office of Research Protections recently offered a helpful webinar explaining the changes and what they mean in the context of conducting studies. Speaker Susan Sesack, the University of Pittsburgh's Research Integrity Officer, provided a thorough overview of research misconduct and changes in the new policy. All members of the research community are welcome and encouraged to view the presentation [here](#).

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Friday, February 20 | noon to 1 p.m.

[Emergency Management: What All Investigators Need to Know](#)

Presented by the University of Pittsburgh Office of Research Protections

Tuesday, March 24 | noon to 1 p.m.

[Integrating Community Populations in Biomedical Research](#)

Presented by the CTSI Responsible Conduct of Research Center

Friday, April 3, 2026: | noon-1 p.m.

[Grounding Health Research in Design: Developing a Practical Toolkit for Health Research](#)

Presented by the Institute for Clinical Research Education

[First Look: 2025 Perceptions and Insights Study](#)

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

CISCRP's Perceptions & Insights Study is the largest global assessment of public and patient perceptions, motivations, and experiences with clinical research

*Recorded Webinar*

[The AI Assistant: Ethical, Efficient, Everyday Use](#)

Presented by the Trial Innovation Network

*Recorded Webinar*

[Optimizing Meta Ads to Recruit More Participants](#)

Presented by the Trial Innovation Network

*Recorded Webinar*

## CTSI Services

CTSI is here to help during all stages of the grant lifecycle. Pre-submission, CTSI research and recruitment facilitators can act as naive readers of your grant, provide help with reviewing your plan for human subjects protections, and assist with recruitment planning and designing the recruitment methods section of your application. CTSI provides letters of support highlighting the infrastructure we have available to help grants succeed.

Our recruitment and regulatory team is always available to help with regulatory and recruitment issues. We are happy to schedule individual consultations.

Our research registry, Pitt+Me, has over 360,000 participants. Pitt+Me regularly informs registrants of research opportunities, and can send targeted emails to the study population of interest.

Many research teams also find it helpful to consult with CTSI's Biostatistics, Epidemiology, and Research Design (BERD) group pre-submission for general advice regarding study design. Expert statisticians can help determine the appropriate number of participants to achieve meaningful power analysis; post data collection, they can assist with analysis.

The Community PARTners team can help researchers engage community stakeholders in the study design process. Community constituents have valuable input into unmet needs that researchers may not have thought of.

Connect with us at [ctsi@pitt.edu](mailto:ctsi@pitt.edu) for assistance!

## Questions for us?

We'd love to hear from you: [ctsi@pitt.edu](mailto:ctsi@pitt.edu)

Pitt+Me questions: [ASKPPM@pitt.edu](mailto:ASKPPM@pitt.edu)

# Pitt CTSI

Clinical and Translational  
Science Institute