Turning Science Into Health: Clinical and Translational Science Awards (CTSA) Program

Operational, administrative and scientific bottlenecks often slow and even block the development and delivery of health solutions. The Clinical and Translational Science Awards (CTSA) Program speeds the translation of research discoveries into improved care. The CTSA Program is funded by NIH's National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences.

The CTSA Program is a network of more than 60 leading medical institutions. These institutions offer expertise, resources and partnerships at the national and local levels to improve the health of individuals and communities. The network's structure helps it respond quickly to urgent public health needs and address long-standing research roadblocks. The CTSA Program also nurtures the field of translational science through education, training and career support at all levels.

CTSA Program Impact

From nationwide initiatives to community-focused programs, CTSA Program institutions turn science into health through innovative and highly collaborative solutions, such as the following:

National COVID Cohort Collaborative (N3C): N3C has delivered interoperability across electronic health record systems nationwide to provide real-world answers to urgent public health COVID-19 questions. N3C-driven research revealed the characteristics of Long COVID and showed that people who were vaccinated before COVID-19 infection had a reduced risk of long-term effects. N3C's size and scope also detected trends among vulnerable groups. For instance, children who were male, Black/African American or obese were more likely to develop dangerous organ inflammation after COVID-19 infection, and people in rural communities were at greater risk of severe COVID-19 outcomes than those in urban areas.

CTSA Program Resources for the Clinical and Translational Science Workforce

- ✓ **Recruitment Innovation Center & Trial Innovation Centers:** https://ncats.nih.gov/research/research-activities/ctsa/projects/tin

- ✓ **Evolve to Next-Gen ACT (ENACT) collaborative electronic health record research platform:** https://www.enact-network.us/

- ✓ **Funding:** https://ncats.nih.gov/funding/funding-opportunities

- ✓ **Training:** https://ncats.nih.gov/research/research-activities/ctsa/applicant-information

COVID-19 Clinical Trials: CTSA Program institutions helped carry out large, rigorous clinical trials to rapidly test the most promising COVID-19 treatments and vaccines on a national level. These trials have offered evidence-based results on potential treatments, such as convalescent plasma, immune modulators and ivermectin. CTSA Program institutions are using master protocols in these clinical trials to speed outcomes and decentralized trial designs to bring treatments to all communities.

Pain Management Effectiveness Research Network: Through the Pain Management Effectiveness Research Network, part of the Helping to End Addiction Long-term® Initiative, or NIH HEAL Initiative®, the CTSA Program institutions and the NCATS Trial Innovation Network support clinical trials that compare the effectiveness of existing nonaddictive pain therapies and test existing or novel approaches for pain prevention and management.

SMART IRB Platform: The Streamlined, Multisite, Accelerated Resources for Trials (SMART) Institutional Review Board (IRB) Platform harmonizes and streamlines IRB review for multisite clinical studies. The SMART IRB design cuts the time from study submission to clinical trial from months to weeks, while ensuring appropriate oversight and protections for research participants. More than 1,000 medical research sites use the SMART IRB Platform.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility: The CTSA Program Diversity, Re-entry and Reintegration Supplements promote diversity in biomedical and behavioral research. These supplements aim to build a clinical and translational science workforce that can improve the quality, safety, efficiency and speed of clinical and translational research. A new DEIA Enterprise Committee will help increase diversity, equity, inclusion and access in CTSA Program-supported research and the broader translational research workforce.

Community Health Needs: CTSA Program institutions work hand in hand with community leaders to understand community needs and improve community health. An innovative CTSA Program study conducted in partnership with Black churches in Louisville, Kentucky, highlighted the need for additional outreach and education to reduce colorectal cancer screening disparities in Black communities. Another CTSA Program–funded analysis revealed that three historically regional fungal infections now appear in at least half of the United States. Researchers produced updated national maps to help clinicians speed detection and treatment beyond areas where the three infections have historically been found. CTSA Program research found that rural hospital closures nationwide compromise nearby hospitals' ability to care for patients, jeopardizing health care access in rural communities.

Read about other CTSA Program activities that are bringing more treatments to all people more quickly: https://ncats.nih.gov/research/research-activities/ctsa/action

Contact the NCATS CTSA Program: NCATS_CTSA_Program@mail.nih.gov

Follow the CTSA Program hashtag on social media: #CTSAProgram

CTSA Program
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Fiscal Year 2023
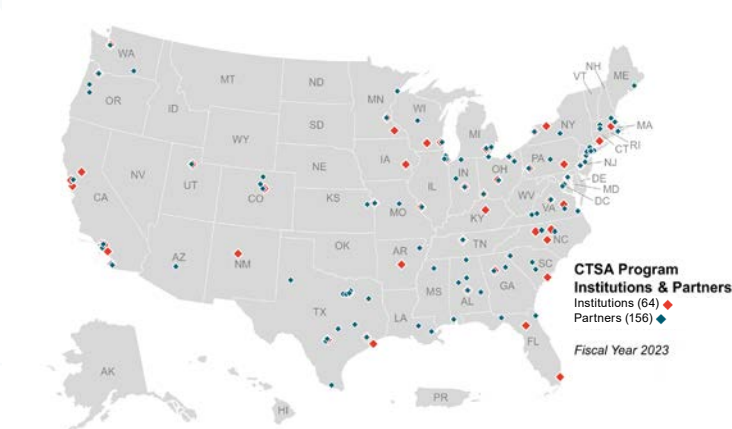
For More Information

About NCATS:
https://ncats.nih.gov/about/ncats-overview

About the CTSA Program:
https://ncats.nih.gov/research/research-activities/ctsa

CTSA Program in Action:
https://ncats.nih.gov/research/research-activities/ctsa/action

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NCATS Research Activities
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NCATS' Bold Goals
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