



Advance Research with Clinical and Translational Science Institutes



What is the Clinical and Translational Science Institute?

The Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI) funds [The Clinical and Translational Science Awards](#) (CTSA) through the National Institute for Health (NIH) and supports a national network of medical institutions that speeds the translation of research discoveries into improved care. This program nurtures the field of translational science through education, training, and support.

[Find Open Program Funding Opportunities](#)

How can the CTSI benefit my Family Medicine Department?

While the traditional focus has often favored specialty/internal medicine partnerships through disease-oriented research rather than a whole-person community-engaged approach, many projects, initiatives, and coordinated support activities can advance family medicine. Additionally, introducing new research opportunities has encouraged CTSIs to increase primary care involvement.

[Find your local NIH Funded CTSA Hub](#)

Advantages of working with the CTSI

Utilize Existing Infrastructure, Networks and Partnerships:

- Opportunities for multisite collaborations
- Supported community-focused research initiatives
- PBRN Development - internal and external
- Enhanced visibility and assistance in securing letters of support

Leadership Integration:

- Guiding community-engaged research initiatives and actively assuming leadership roles or serving as core faculty members.
- The role of family medicine in providing internal traction, making leadership more effective in driving these efforts

Mentorship and Fellowship:

- Support research/scholarly activities for residents
- Guide career or academic development
- Educational and Scholarship Opportunities

Learning and Cultural Engagement:

- Access to webinars, symposiums, and cultural programs
- Improved quality improvement capacity
- Access to boilerplates, facilities and resources information
- Training series focused on grant writing skills
- Biostatistical support, research methods, grants management, bioinformatics, and research training.¹

Challenges to Consider

Need for a Primary Care Research Primer:

- There is a potential need to equip faculty and stakeholders better.

Faculty Support:

- Appears to be more aligned with K awards, which may not be as relevant for FM faculty seeking to diversify their portfolios and balance between clinical and research time.

Funding Clarification:

- Internal grants should not be misconstrued as salary support and depending on your institution, collaborative projects may not provide indirect funding that benefits FM.

Sustainability:

- Self-sustainment is an important component of receiving funding, but continuation of the project can be difficult once funding ends.

Overcoming Challenges

Succession Planning:

- Leadership buy-in for sustainability planning
- Socializing to new chairs – why this partnership is important for the department ([chair curriculum on research coming soon](#))

Earn standing with your CTSI

- Conducting Practice Based Research Networks (PBRN) and community engagement research with engaged clinics

Intradepartmental networking

- Integration and lack of duplication

Strong relationships with your local CTSI

- May increase the likelihood of receiving a funding award, especially when grants require quick turnaround times.
- Department chairs, research or PBRN directors and other researchers' involvement during the planning process may be beneficial. Meeting with the proposed principal investigator and describing the department's programs and connections, and how the department can help achieve CTSA requirements.
- Failed submissions with low scores on the community engagement section (which is required) can facilitate these interactions.²
- The department needs to go to the dean, the General Clinical Research Center (GCRC) director, or CTSA planning leadership and demonstrate what the department can offer.¹



¹Family Medicine Updates. From the Society of Teachers of Family Medicine, North American Primary Care Research Group, and Association of Departments of Family Medicine. Ann Fam Med 2007;5:275–277. DOI: 10.1370/afm.700.

²Ewigman B; North American Primary Care Research Group. CTSAs and family medicine research--time to get connected. Ann Fam Med. 2008 Mar-Apr;6(2):181–2. doi: 10.1370/afm.828. PMID: 18332418; PMCID: PMC2267419.

³Johnson, M. S., Davis, A., & The CTSA Strike Force. (2007). Academic family medicine's response to CTSA. The Annals of Family Medicine, 5(3), 275–277. <https://doi.org/10.1370/afm.700>