

UMass Center for Clinical and Translational Science Newsletter

Volume 2020
Issue 11 *UMCCTS Newsletter November 2020*

Article 1

2020-11-16

UMCCTS Newsletter, November 2020

UMass Center for Clinical and Translational Science

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Repository Citation

UMass Center for Clinical and Translational Science . UMCCTS Newsletter, November 2020. *UMass Center for Clinical and Translational Science Newsletter* 2020(11):1104. <https://doi.org/10.13028/mv7g-g347>. Retrieved from https://escholarship.umassmed.edu/umccts_news/vol2020/iss11/1

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November 2020 Newsletter

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NEWS

The National COVID Cohort Collaborative (N3C): N3C is an NIH NCATS-sponsored analytics platform that contains clinical data from the electronic health records of people who were tested for the novel coronavirus or who have had related symptoms. UMass Medical School was one of the first 12 vanguard sites to deposit COVID data to N3C. We are happy to announce that we have executed all the regulatory work required to facilitate access to N3C Data Enclave for our UMMS and Memorial investigators.

CTSA sites across the country are continuing to contribute data to N3C with the goal of creating a harmonized data set from all 60+ CTSA's. Currently, the N3C Data Enclave boasts upwards of 600K COVID related cohorts (>60K COVID positive data) from 15 sites. Access to de-identified or identified data sets is available: a) access to de-identified or safe harbor datasets does not require institutional IRB approval; and b) access to datasets with PHI requires institutional IRB approval. More information on the N3C Data Enclave is available at <https://ncats.nih.gov/n3c>. For any questions or assistance in gaining access to N3C Data Enclave, contact our UMCCTS - N3C admin, Mahesh Vangala Mahesh.Vangala@umassmed.edu.



UMass Integrative Biomarker Center (InBioC) open for business: At the UMass Integrative Biomarker Center (InBioC), we look forward to working with investigators to provide relevant and timely proteomics or RNA measurements (i.e. microRNA, mRNA, etc) to support clinical projects for validation, preliminary data, grant submissions, etc. We do require that data generated as part of this initiative be made available to other investigators as part of a virtual data repository that will allow data sharing and/or reanalysis. We will provide “Seed Money” along with support for investigators to generate data needed for programs, grants, and projects. Initially, these will be awarded in the range of 1-5K. Please see our webpage (<https://www.umassmed.edu/InBioC/>) to learn more.

COVID-19

Clinical Research Nurses Needed for RADx Studies: The Center for Advancing Point of Care Therapeutics (CAPCaT) has been designated as a national test center for the NIH Rapid Acceleration of Diagnostics (RADx) program. Our Center is looking for experienced clinical research nurses with an interest in working with people undergoing COVID-19 testing to collect information and specimens in order to validate new and innovative test devices coming to UMass from around the world. The positions are available immediately. If you are interested or if you have any questions, please contact Danielle Howard

(Danielle.howard@umassmed.edu) or apply at
<https://www.ummsjobs.com/job/5416/> or <https://www.ummsjobs.com/job/5000/>

UMMS UPDATE regarding human subjects research during the COVID-19 pandemic can be found here: <https://umassmed.edu/ccts/covid-19/>. This website is updated frequently; last update Nov 12, 2020.

NIH UPDATE: For up-to-date NIH COVID-19 information, including informational videos, proposal submission and award management resources, human subjects and clinical trials guidance, animal welfare, frequently asked questions regarding flexibilities for grantees, and funding opportunities, click here: <https://www.nih.gov/health-information/coronavirus>

CLINICAL TRIALS DATABASE: To search for active Covid-19 clinical trials at UMMS, please visit <https://www.conqueringdiseases.org/>. Conquering Diseases is an easy to use web-based search tool to find, share and save clinical studies relevant to patients. It also provides educational resources to help patients and families learn about and find clinical studies. It provides a patient-friendly and direct way to learn about clinical studies and a secure environment to share clinical study opportunities and communicate with study staff for screening and enrollment into clinical studies.

THE NATIONAL COVID COHORT COLLABORATIVE (N3C): The National COVID Cohort Collaborative (N3C) Data Enclave is now open to scientists looking for evidence-based answers to COVID-19 research questions. This centralized and secure national data analytics platform is for COVID-19 research, including studying potential risk factors, protective factors and long-term health consequences, as the pandemic continues to evolve. Its data and analytics capabilities will grow over time. [Learn more about the N3C data](#) and [applying for access](#).

EVENTS

Community Engagement and Collaboration Core Fall 2020 Webinar Series: Panelists will describe and present findings on three studies completed and in process to reduce the health risks for justice-involved persons in Massachusetts.

Title: Strategies for reducing adverse outcomes for criminal justice-involved populations

Time: November 16, 2020, 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Registration link: <https://arcsapps.umassmed.edu/redcap/surveys/?s=RK7NH9K934>

Assay Guidance Workshop for High-Throughput Screening and Lead Discovery:

NCATS is hosting a two-day workshop that will cover a broad range of critical concepts underlying assay development and implementation for high-throughput screening and lead discovery projects. This workshop is designed to disseminate critical information about the implementation of robust assay methods and is particularly relevant for researchers developing molecular probes or clinical candidates.

Time: Nov 18 8:30 – 5:30 and 19 8:50 – 5:00.

Registration link: <https://ncats.corsizio.com/c/5c7d654ab7541f6fabbbcb35>

2020 NIH Rural Health Seminar: Challenges in the Era of COVID-19: Join NCATS and the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities for the 2020 NIH Rural Health

Seminar: Challenges in the Era of COVID-19. The seminar will bring together researchers, medical practitioners and others to explore topics in rural health. Learn about the impact of COVID-19 on rural populations, on systems and workforce issues, and on community engagement in response to the pandemic.

Time: November 19, 2020, 1:00 – 5:00 PM.

Registration link: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2020-nih-rural-health-seminar-challenges-in-the-era-of-covid-19-tickets-117521105791>

Virtual Workshop on Systemic Immunogenicity Considerations for AAV-Mediated Gene Therapy: The National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS) at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research (CBER) at the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) are co-hosting a virtual Workshop on Systemic Immunogenicity Considerations for Adeno-Associated Virus (AAV)-Mediated Gene Therapy. This meeting will bring together scientists, therapeutic developers and patient representatives to focus on immunogenicity issues related to the systemic administration of AAV gene therapy products and identify solutions for those issues.

Nov. 30 – Dec. 1, 2020

Click here to register: [https://events-support.com/events/NCATS Gene Therapies November 2020](https://events-support.com/events/NCATS_Gene_Therapies_November_2020)

Intersections Science Fellows Symposium: The main goals of this cross-institutional symposium are to showcase the outstanding research of postdocs in the biological sciences, including those from backgrounds historically underrepresented in academia, and to support the scientific and professional development of the next generation of academic faculty. For more details, see the symposium website: <https://www.intersectionssciencefellows.com/> January 6-8, 2021

FUNDING

CCTS SPARK PROGRAM: Rolling application deadline. This program's priorities are to support studies that impact clinical care and research methodologies, support students/trainees, and provide access to funds to generate pilot and preliminary data for external grant submissions. For more information, click on this link:

<https://www.umassmed.edu/ccts/funding/spark-program/>

CCTS SMALL CONFERENCE GRANTS: Rolling application deadline. This funding facilitates the development of faculty-to-faculty networks within the University system. Click on this link for more information: <https://umassmed.edu/ccts/funding/small-conference-grants/>

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY: postdoctoral fellowships to prepare the next generation of scientists to conduct implementation research that addresses critical cancer prevention and control care delivery issues.

NCATS ASPIRE: Reduction-to-Practice Challenge: Opens 11/30. NCATS invites innovators and multi-expert teams to participate in the NCATS ASPIRE Reduction-to-Practice Challenge. The goal is the development of a platform that scientists can use to advance their translational science relevant to development and testing of new and safer treatments of pain, opioid use disorder and overdose. NCATS anticipates that this integrated platform

ultimately can be generalized to address many of the roadblocks in automated chemistry. Stage 1 of the Reduction-to-Practice Challenge opens Nov. 30, 2020, and submissions are due by Feb. 28, 2021, at 5 p.m. EST. For more information visit <https://ncats.nih.gov/aspire/2020Challenge>

EDUCATION

Postdoctoral Training in Cancer Prevention and Control: The NCI-funded PRACCTIS program (Prevention and Control of Cancer: Training for Change in Individuals and Systems) at UMMS is now accepting applications for postdoctoral scholars to start January 2021 and August 2021. We train independent researchers to address critical prevention and control care delivery issues across the cancer continuum, including primary prevention, screening, diagnosis, treatment and survivorship, with emphasis on promoting change in individuals, providers and systems. Our faculty mentors are leaders in implementation science, health equity and low resource settings, health behavior change, health informatics, systems change and health policy, health communications, population health sciences, and prevention and intervention research. Applicants must plan to pursue an independent research career focused on cancer prevention and control, have earned a doctoral degree (PhD, ScD, MD, DO, etc.), and be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident. For more information contact Barbara Estabrook, Barbara.estabrook@umasmed.edu

GREATER WORCESTER COVID-19 COMMUNITY HEALTH SURVEY: UMass Medical School, in collaboration with the City of Worcester and the Central Massachusetts Regional Public Health Alliance is conducting the Great Worcester COVID-19 Community Health Survey. The online survey, which takes about **10 minutes to complete**, asks respondents about changes in their lives due to COVID since March 10, including their health, finances, activities outside the home, access to medical care, employment, housing and food security. The names of the street a respondent lives on and the closest cross street will be vital for understanding circumstances in specific neighborhoods. Providing contact information is optional for respondents who want to receive survey results, and who are willing to be contacted about the survey. The survey also provides a list of local resources for households experiencing distress due to COVID-19. **The survey is available in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Vietnamese, Albanian and Russian.** To participate, please click [here](#).

DID YOU KNOW?

HRPP QA/QI: The Human Research Protection Program (HRPP) Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement (QA/QI) Program is a component of the UMass Center for Clinical and Translational Science. The program is independent of the IRB and helps study teams and investigators by conducting routine post-approval monitoring of on-going research to evaluate adherence with institutional requirements and federal regulations. If there are review findings, the QA/QI manager shares those findings with investigators and study teams, and provides direct education on the findings, including how to avoid making similar errors in the future. In order to support improvement at an institutional level, the QA/QI manager shares aggregated data from reviews with the HRPP leadership and the Research Community to identify trends and target areas for education. The program also makes [self-evaluation tools](#) available to investigators and study teams seeking to perform their own assessments. To learn more

about HRPP QA/QI HRP-142, visit: <https://www.umassmed.edu/globalassets/ccts/ccts-media/irb/updated-sops-2015/hrp-142-hrpp-qa-qi-program-final.pdf>.

NATIONAL CENTER FOR DATA TO HEALTH (CD2H): The goal of CD2H is to make data more meaningful, open and accessible. The CD2H supports a vibrant and evolving collaborative informative ecosystem for the CTSA program and beyond. The CD2H harnesses and expands an ecosystem for translational scientists to discover and share their software, data and other research resources within the CTSA program network. The CD2H also creates a social coding environment for translational science institutions, leveraging the community-driven DREAM challenges as a mechanism to stimulate innovation. To learn more, click [here](#).

SHARE YOUR SUCCESS STORY

Have you had *your research published* that cites the UMass Center for Clinical and Translational Science? Has *your patent been filed* on technology developed using Center funding or resources? Did your pilot project receive external grant funding? Share it with us at ccts@umassmed.edu. Sharing your success demonstrates the importance and effect of the Center for Clinical and Translational Science at UMass.

CITE & SUBMIT

Please cite the NIH CTSA award any time you use The UMMS Center for Clinical and Translational Science resources, services and facilities or received funding through the Center. ***“The project described is supported by the National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences, National Institutes of Health, through Grant UL1 TR001453, (or TL1 TR001454, or KL2 TR001455, as appropriate). The content is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the official views of the NIH.”***

Newsletter Submissions: *To be included in the CCTS Monthly Newsletter, please send announcements, including a link, to ccts@umassmed.edu. The newsletter is published the first week of each month.*

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