



NETWORK UPDATES

Pilot Study – Effects of Vitamin D3 [25(OH)D3] on Vascular Function and Cardiovascular Risk Factors

The Pilot PIs submitted a response to issues raised by the NIH Protocol Review Committee in their letter on October 3 based on their September 18 review.

Collaborative Projects

Research Centers in Minority Institutions Infrastructure for Clinical and Translational Research (RCTR) Project. The weekly calls with the five RCTR centers continue as well as conversations with the individual teams to address their specific short and long-term needs. Dr. Ahmed Fadiel, RCTR- Meharry, visited the DTCC on October 31 to work directly with the DTCC team in addressing informatics requirements for the RCTR proposal. The submission deadline for the RCTR proposal is November 18, 2008.

Clinical Network Feasibility Awards (CRNFA). The DTCC was contacted by Duke Translational Medicine Institute to determine the Center's interest in collaborating on this award. The one-year project aims to perform a requirements and gap analysis and implementation plan on the use of the CDISC Submission Data Tabulation Model (SDTM) for data transmission between RTRN sites and the RTRN DTCC; and, to perform an economic analysis of use of the standard in RTRN trials. The collaborating institutions are RTRN DTCC, RTRN site – University of Puerto Rico, Duke Translational Medicine Institute and CDISC. The submission deadline for the CRNFA proposal is November 13, 2008.

Other collaborative projects are being considered. Harvard University has contacted RTRN PI, Dr. Keith Norris to initiate a collaborative project that will focus on Community Engagement. A possible collaboration with the University of Michigan is being spearheaded by Dr. Raphael Isokpehi, Co-lead of the RTRN Bioinformatics Working Group.

External Advisory Committee (EAC)

The second External Advisory Committee (EAC) meeting was held via teleconference on October 16. The discussion focused on mentoring the mentors in the network to ensure viable working relationships between the seasoned researchers and the junior-level investigators and, ensuring the network was prepared to address auditing and quality control issues.

The EAC is an advisory board comprised of noted professionals who specialize in informatics and clinical, translational, and community-based research and engagement. The committee is comprised of **Carol Mangione**, M.D., clinical researcher in Minority Aging Research; University of California, Los Angeles; **Diane Wara**, M.D., clinical researcher and former Program Director for General Clinical Research Center, University of California, San Francisco; **Ann Aziza Wright**, Director of Los Angeles Youth and Family Services Division; and, **Charlie Mead**, Technology Officer at the NCI. Dr. Meade also plays a central role in the design and implementation of the caBIG Program.

The roles and responsibilities of the RTRN EAC are to:

- o evaluate progress toward stated goals
- o recommend changes, refinements, and improvements
- o identify alternative resources
- o assure that programmatic issues or concerns raised during NCRR staff reviews are addressed appropriately
- o provide scientific and technical assistance and guidelines with respect to quality control, uniformity of data collection, management of the collective health disparity database, and data analysis

Steering Committee and Subcommittees

Several of the seven subcommittees are meeting via teleconference in preparation of the upcoming meeting on November 30, in Honolulu, Hawaii. All subcommittees have been asked to submit updates and/or announcements about their groups' progress-to-date which can be shared with the RCMI community. Information should be submitted to communications@rtrn.net.

Translational Research Clusters

The RTRN Research Subcommittee will meet on Thursday, November 7, to set an agenda to support the launching of the RTRN Translational Research Clusters. A number of outstanding RCMI researchers who have expertise in the various Cluster areas have agreed to provide leadership for the initial organization, to identify others who are interested across the network and to set a research agenda which will include proposal development and funding strategies to support cluster activities. The Research committee is encouraging TRC leadership and interested investigators to attend their subcommittee meeting on November 30, in Honolulu, Hawaii. RTRN PI, Dr. Keith Norris chairs the Research subcommittee.

Researchers interested in joining one or more of the research clusters can complete an on-line form by accessing <http://dtccweb.rtrn.net/ClusterSearch/AddProfile.aspx>.

DTCC Activities

- Dr. Jae Eun Lee, Director of Biostatistics, attended the TB Global Data Standards- CDISC Implementation Workshop held September 11-12. The goal of the workshop was to bring together TB researchers and CDISC experts to develop a modeling specification for the TB data standards in CDISC SDTM. RTRN will seek to build relationships with experts in CDISC and enhance its ability to respond to FDA's requirements for submission of data with CDISC format. RTRN expects there will be full collaborative partnerships established with the TB working group.
- Dr. Jae Eun Lee has presented paper at two conferences. On October 9-10, Dr. Jae Eun Lee presented a paper titled, "Application of Geographic Information System to Stroke Disparity Study: Mississippi State as an Analytical Unit," at the 8th Annual Conference on Eliminating Health Disparities to Tackle 'Strobesity'. He also presented three studies at the 136th APHA Annual Meeting & Exposition on October 25-29 in San Diego, California. The study titles are:
 - o Title 1: Disparity of Geographic Access to Ophthalmic Manpower and Its Relationship to Diabetic Retinopathy (**Oral presentation**)
 - o Title 2: Gender Difference of Risk Factors for Peripheral Arterial Disease in African-American Diabetic Patients: Jackson Heart Study (**Poster presentation**)

- Title 3: Motor and cognitive status exert non-linear effect on risk for falls during inpatient rehabilitation (**Poster presentation**)
- Director of the DTCC Information Security and Technology Integration division (ISTI), Omar Aldaoud attended the Oracle Clinical Users Group 2008 conference on October 12-15. The sessions focused on Remote Data Capture (RDC) 4.5.3 training, features and troubleshooting; release of the newest version of Thesaurus Management System (TMS); and, included discussions with vendors about the new updates to Oracle and services and products available to support Oracle Clinical and clinical trials in general.
- On October 15-17, DTCC Program Director, Dr. M. Edwina Barnett and Clinical Data Services and Informatics Director, M. Theresa Perry attended the CTSA Informatics Conference in Washington, D.C. The two-day event exposed the DTCC team to the challenges sites within the network face concerning interoperability, repositories, resourcing, communications and collaborations. In addition to identifying opportunities for informatics collaborations between RTRN and CTSA, they were introduced to the functions and approaches for overcoming obstacles that the RTRN is currently facing or will be facing. Dr. Barnett presented an “Introduction the RTRN” and set a course for full collaborations between both networks.
- The DTCC hosted the first webinar, *Effective Clinical Trial Design: Randomization, Blinding and Replication*, in the Biostatistics Seminar Series on Wednesday, October 29. The presenter was Dr. Daniel Sarpong, Director and Senior Biostatistician for the Jackson Heart Study and a co-lead for the RTRN Biostatistical Working Group. The goal of the seminar was to communicate the essential role of randomization, blinding and replication in designing clinical studies or trials. The primary outcome was to assist the RTRN community with effectively applying these techniques in the design of their studies. The webinar is available on the RTRN web at http://www.rtrn.net/education_training/seminars_symposia.htm.
- On October 31, Dr. Ahmed Fadiel, Associate Professor and Director of the Meharry Center for Bioinformatics and Computational Biology, Meharry Medical College, visited the RTRN DTCC for a full-day of discussion and work with the DTCC program director and the directors of clinical data services and informatics, ISTI and Biostatistics. As a member of the Meharry team working on the RCTR proposal, Dr. Fadiel wanted his visit to the DTCC to address questions related to partnerships and collaborative projects, information security needs for their site, new bioinformatics projects and future publications and credits.
- Several members of the DTCC team will attend the 11th RCMI Symposium in Honolulu, Hawaii. Dr. James Perkins, DTCC Director; Dr. M. Edwina Barnett, Program Director; Dr. Jae Eun Lee, Director of Biostatistics; M. Theresa Perry, Director of Clinical Data Services and Informatics, and Omar Aldaoud, Director of Information Security and Technology Integration will be in attendance November 30 – December 5. The DTCC will host additional activities in conjunction with the RCMI Symposium which will include Portal Trainings, demonstrations of the Remote Data Capture (RDC) System available for RCMI clinical/translational projects, an RTRN HealthGrid Panel as well as meetings of the RTRN Subcommittees, Steering Committee, Working Groups and Research Clusters.
- Finally, DTCC abstracts have been accepted for poster or oral presentation during the symposium.
 - Dr. Jae Eun Lee, Director of Biostatics **(Poster)**

- The Protective Effect of Social Support on Alcohol Consumption Associated with Racial Discrimination among African-American Adults: the Jackson Heart Study
- Statistical Capacities in RTRN Network: Are We Ready?
- Statistical Issues in RTRN Network: Priority-Setting through Needs Assessment
- M. Theresa Perry, Director of Clinical Data Services and Informatics (Poster)
 - Estimating RTRN Clinical Data Services: Preliminary Capacity Assessment
- Omar Aldaoud, Director of Information Security and Technology Integration (Oral)
 - Building the Capacity to Facilitate Collaborative Clinical Research in Minority Institutions
- Traci Hayes, Director of Communications (Poster)
 - Optimizing Communication Methods for a Multi-Institutional Research Network

RTRN Activities

- RTRN will host a HealthGrid Panel on Wednesday, December 3, at 9:00AM- 10:30AM at the RCMI Symposium. The keynote speaker is Peter J. Hunter¹, PhD, Director Bioengineering Institute, University of Auckland, New Zealand. Professor Hunter and a moderated panel comprised of: Howard Bilofsky², Jose Conde³, Mary Kratz⁴, and Yannick Legré⁵ will discuss the intersection of priorities related to the HealthGrid, where biomedical research and healthcare meets cyberinfrastructure. This session will address strategic planning interests of individual RCMI programs related to the RCMI Translational Research Network (RTRN). Dr. M. Edwina Barnett, DTCC Program Director, will moderate the RTRN HealthGrid Panel and Workshop. An afternoon session hosted by the RTRN Bioinformatics Working Group will further elaborate on the key issues presented during the morning HealthGrid discussion. Yannick Legré and Meredith Nahm⁶ will present. All HealthGrid panelists will be available for a Question and Answer session. *(Meeting location and time will be posted)*
 - ¹Bioengineering Institute, University of Auckland, New Zealand. ²HealthGrid United States, ³Center for Information Architecture in Research, University of Puerto-Rico, ⁴HealthGrid United States, ⁵HealthGrid Initiative, ⁶Biomedical Informatics, Duke Translational Medicine Institute.
- RTRN Upcoming Events
 - Steering Committee and Subcommittees Meetings – November 30, 2008
 - RTRN Exhibit: Portal Training and RDC Demonstrations – December 1 – 4, 2008 (times will be posted)
 - RTRN HealthGrid Panel - Wednesday, December 3, 2008 at 9:00AM – 10:30AM
 - Bioinformatics Working Group Meeting/Discussion of HealthGrid Session – Wednesday, December 3, 2008 (Time and location will be posted)
 - RTRN Biostatistics Working Group Meeting – Friday, December 5, 2008 at 9:00AM – 11:00AM

This Network Update has been prepared for the Steering Committee and Subcommittee members. We will distribute these updates on a monthly basis. **Please provide comments and/or suggestions to communications@rtn.net.**