ICTR Pilot Awards Program Supports Broad Array of Translational Research

The NIH Clinical and Translational Science Award (CTSA) that supports UW ICTR allows the institute to fund clinical and translational research efforts at UW-Madison, partner Marshfield Clinic, and Wisconsin-based community partner organizations. Since 2007, UW ICTR has invested more than $12 million in a total of 200 research projects spanning the spectrum from translational discovery research, to clinical trials and research in the community, with the ultimate goal of positively impacting healthcare practices and improving public health.

Christine Sorkness, PharmD, ICTR senior associate executive director, comments, “Pilot funding RFAs released this December 1 mark the tenth consecutive round of funding for our program. Together with our Vouchers and Dissemination Supplements, the pilot awards program represents vital seed money to support investigators as they develop new research directions and novel approaches.”

New this year, investigators will not be allowed to submit an application in response to more than one pilot award RFA per calendar year. Applicants are encouraged to read the RFAs closely for updated requirements.

- **Translational Basic & Clinical Research Pilot Awards (RFA Release Dec 1)**

  Applications responsive to this RFA should propose translational discovery activities (biological, social, behavioral mechanisms that underlie disease); development of biomarkers, target and lead molecules, and devices (mechanical, computational); preclinical and animal models; proof of concept studies; and translation of discovery to patients (new diagnostic, treatment, and prevention methods, Phase 1, and 2 clinical trials). These awards were previously known as Basic & Clinical Research Pilot Awards.

  - $50,000/12 months; due Mar 4, 2016
  - (Mandatory Letter of Intent due Jan 15, 2016)

  For more information, please contact Peggy Hatfield, pmhatfie@wisc.edu, 608-261-1939.

- **Clinical & Community Outcomes Research Pilot (CCOR; RFA Release Dec 1)**

  These awards support research that translates knowledge into improvements in clinical practice and community health. The funding aids research that addresses the gap between what we know and what we do in practice, as well as development of interventions that require individual, organizational, or system behavior change, and comparative effectiveness research.

  - $75,000/12 months; due Mar 18, 2016
  - (Mandatory Letter of Intent due Jan 15, 2016)
  - RFA primer online December 15, [videos.med.wisc.edu/events/227](http://videos.med.wisc.edu/events/227)

  For more information contact Kate Judge, kjudge@wisc.edu, 608-262-7125.

Continued on page 4

Applications are encouraged in the fields of pediatrics, geriatrics, and health equity/health disparities.
Workforce Development Group Welcomes New Staff

The UW ICTR Research Education and Career Development core (REC) has both new and familiar faces on their team. Peggy Hatfield, PhD, longtime UW ICTR research ambassador, was appointed administrative director this summer. She is responsible for leading and managing the REC programs. Hatfield is also continuing her responsibilities as the Type 1 pilot award program manager. She replaces Pam Asquith, PhD.

Hatfield is joined by Tisha Kawahara, MS, who will be responsible for managing and coordinating the ICTR KL2 Scholars program and the ICTR non-credit educational courses and workshops. Kawahara comes to ICTR with more than 15 years of experience in research and research administration, having served most recently as program manager in the department of Biostatistics.

In addition to these staff changes, REC is transitioning to a more descriptive title of Workforce Development. Continuing members of the group are Sally Wedde, administrator of the graduate program in clinical investigation and the TL1 trainee program, and Marcia Schiffman, administrative assistant.

Christine Sorkness, PharmD, ICTR senior associate executive director, comments, “Please join me in welcoming the new members of the REC team. Workforce development is an essential component of our mission from NIH and we are pleased to continue our record of having exceptionally talented and dedicated staff in this area.”

Workforce Development staff work closely with the ICTR Mentoring Initiatives team, led by Chris Pfund, PhD. The mentoring team is part of the National Research Mentoring Network, funded by NIH, and collaborates with the teams at Boston University, University of Minnesota, Morehouse School of Medicine, and University of North Texas Health Sciences Center. See: ictr.wisc.edu/files/ICTR_Today_v7n5_FINALa.pdf.

Mentoring is central to all Workforce Development activities at ICTR, including the KL2 Scholars Program, the TL1 Trainee Program, and the Graduate Program in Clinical Investigation.

---

News from the Research Education & Career Development Core

Building Interdisciplinary Team-Based Research

An eight part series on the conduct of team-based research projects. These presentations were originally given as part of the 2014-2015 KL2 Scholars career development seminars.

videos.med.wisc.edu/events/223

---

Keep UW ICTR UP-TO-DATE with NIH

Acknowledged ICTR Support

Publications arising from UW ICTR supported research should acknowledge support by stating “Supported by grant UL1TR000427 from the Clinical and Translational Science Award (CTSA) program of the National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences, NIH.”
Jamie Limjoco, MD, MS, a neonatologist, medical director of the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), and assistant professor of pediatrics (CHS), earned the MS in Clinical Investigation in June 2015. Limjoco developed her thesis with Hrissanthi (Chris) Ikonomidou, MD, PhD, as primary advisor and with guidance from De-Ann Pillers, MD, PhD, and Christine Sorkness, PharmD. Her thesis was titled, *Providing Amplitude-Integrated Electroencephalography (aEEG) in Neonates with Drug Abstinence Syndrome.*

As an attending neonatologist at Meriter Hospital in 2011, Limjoco met Ikonomidou and pediatric neurologist Lucyna Zawadzki, MD, during newborn neurology consults. Subsequently, she and Ikonomidou worked together as specialists, while she and Zawadzki adapted a hypothermia protocol for use in treating newborns suffering from hypoxic/ischemic encephalopathy.

With that background, Limjoco entered the Clinical Investigation program in 2012 with a research focus on describing brain function in infants undergoing neonatal drug withdrawal and characterizing abnormal background patterns and seizure burden resulting from exposure to maternal opiates *in utero.* Study outcomes included amplitude integrated electroencephalography (aEEG), neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS) scores, and length of hospital stay. This project was a collaboration of Limjoco and Zawadzki, under Ikonomidou’s mentorship.

Limjoco notes, “Research is scarce about optimal treatment strategies and long-term neurodevelopmental outcomes for babies suffering from chemical withdrawal secondary to maternal drug use. These neonates are at substantially higher risk for seizures and prolonged hospital stays.”

She continues, “My current aim is to use the results from the pilot study performed for my master’s research and finish developing aEEG as a tool to guide objective assessment of infants with NAS and their subsequent management with pharmacotherapy. Unfortunately, NAS is a growing problem, with the increase in maternal use of opiates, both prescribed and recreational.”

As the first medical director in the American Family Children’s Hospital NICU, Limjoco continues to work with a clinical research team that includes biostatisticians, neurologists, neonatologists, nurses, and pharmacists.

This work was supported by grants from the Meriter Foundation and UW SMPH.

---

**ICTR Selects Three New Pre-Doctoral Trainees**

Three students have joined the ICTR TL1 career development pre-doctoral training program funded by the NIH. They are Anna Barker, Ryan Denu, and Colin Grove, MS.

The TL1 program has six trainees representing the Departments of Biochemistry, Medical Physics, Pharmacy, Population Health Sciences, Orthopedics and Rehabilitation, and Surgery. The other trainees are Matt Brown, Kai Ludwig, and Andy Voter. All trainees are students earning a PhD, MS, or PhD minor in the ICTR Graduate Program in Clinical Investigation.

Trainees earn a stipend, health insurance, tuition and fees, and a travel allowance. They participate in biennial mentor meetings attended by ICTR leadership, monthly writing workshops, and career development sessions.

Barker is a full time student in the Medical Scientist Training Program (MSTP) earning a PhD in Population Health Sciences-Epidemiology with a minor in Clinical Investigation, after which she will complete medical school. She is investigating the intersection of infection and nutrition issues, particularly among vulnerable older patients. Mentor: Nasia Safdar, MD, PhD, Associate Professor, Medicine (Infectious Disease), SMPH.

Denu is also a full time MSTP student. He is earning a PhD in Cellular and Molecular Biology with a minor in Clinical Investigation. Denu’s research focus is breast cancer mechanisms with implications for potential cell therapy. Mentor: Mark Burkard, MD, PhD, Associate Professor of Medicine (Hematology/Oncology).

Grove is a board-certified clinical specialist in neurologic physical therapy earning the PhD in Clinical Investigation as a dual degree student with a focus on vestibular function research. Grove is also earning a doctorate of Physical Therapy online from Temple University. He has been employed as a clinician at UW Health for more than 20 years. Mentor: Bryan Heiderscheit, PT, PhD, Associate Professor of Orthopedics and Rehabilitation and Mark Pyle, MD, PhD, Professor of Surgery (Otolaryngology).
Dissemination & Implementation Research Award Program (D&I; RFA Release Dec 1)

This award program will provide support for research that addresses how to best ensure evidence-based strategies, interventions, and programs are effectively delivered in clinical practice and community health programs.

- $150,000/18 months; due Mar 18, 2016 (Mandatory Letter of Intent due Jan 15, 2016)
- Mandatory Workshop: Feb 2, 2016, 11am-noon; HSLC 1345
- RFA primer online December 15, videos.med.wisc.edu/events/227

For more information contact Kate Judge, kjudge@wisc.edu, 608-262-7125.

Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Award (PCOR; RFA Release Dec 1)

Patient-centered outcomes research (PCOR) focuses on engaging stakeholders throughout the research process, as well as ensuring implementation and dissemination of research results. As many investigators lack the infrastructure, partnerships and preliminary data to apply for funding opportunities in this area, this RFA supports activities leading to a PCORI (Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute) application.

- $100,000/12 months; due Mar 18, 2016 (Mandatory Letter of Intent due Jan 15, 2016)
- Mandatory Workshop: Feb 2016; Applicants are required to attend at least two hours of a PCOR training to be offered in 2016. See details in RFA.
- RFA primer online December 15, videos.med.wisc.edu/events/227
- 2016 PCOR Training Opportunities

For more information contact Kate Judge, kjudge@wisc.edu, 608-262-7125.

Dissemination Supplement Award (RFA Release Dec 1)

Dissemination Supplements address the gap between university-based research discoveries and the translation of this knowledge into programs and policies to improve the health of the public. This program supports the dissemination of evidence-based strategies where the research was largely conducted at UW-Madison or Marshfield Clinic. However, the principal investigator for the proposed project does not need to be the individual who conducted the research.

- Up to $15,000/18 months; due Mar 18, 2016 (No Letter of Intent required)
- UW ICTR consultation encouraged. Contact Melody Bockenfeld, bockenfeld@wisc.edu to schedule.
- RFA primer online December 15, videos.med.wisc.edu/events/227

For more information contact Kate Judge, kjudge@wisc.edu, 608-262-7125.

Science of Community Engagement

NCATS has made the Science of Community Engagement a high priority for CTSAs nationwide. Community engagement is essential for translating research evidence into real-life community practice and improvements in human health; optimal ways to engage different communities have yet to be defined. The science of community engagement seeks to identify the most effective approaches and best practices in an experimental, data-driven fashion.

The UW ICTR pilot awards program is responding to this priority by adding the Science of Community Engagement as one of the special criteria for the Clinical and Community Outcomes Research (CCOR) pilot award. Applicants are encouraged to include a specific aim in the pilot proposal which evaluates different approaches for community engagement.

Please refer to the RFA online for more details (ictr.wisc.edu/FundingOpportunities).

ICTR Novel Methods Awards Program (Dec 18, 2015 Deadline)

This round of the Novel Methods Awards Program emphasizes biomedical informatics, precision medicine and phenotyping, and regenerative medicine. These methods should improve the translational process by minimizing roadblocks to the efficiency and effectiveness of clinical and translational research. Due Dec 18, the mandatory letter of intent deadline for the current application round is past and these awards will be made April 2016.

For more information, please contact Peggy Hatfield, pmhatfie@wisc.edu, 608-261-1939.

Voucher Awards Program for Research Resources (Current Deadline Expired)

These short term, low dollar awards (up to $7,500) support the translation of discovery into therapy. Applicants must document an urgent need for services based upon recent extramural grant review, or milestones for therapeutic development. Requests are redeemable only at one of the ICTR-affiliated laboratories.

For more information about upcoming application rounds, please contact Peggy Hatfield, pmhatfie@wisc.edu, 608-261-1939.
The ICTR Community-Academic Partnerships core announces a series of coordinated activities for investigators wishing to secure funding to conduct high-quality, state-of-the-art patient-centered outcomes research (PCOR). These PCOR training activities will be rolled out over the course of 2016. For more details please refer to the links provided under each activity and/or email the contact person for more information or to be placed on a mailing list.

Sustaining Engagement of Blended Stakeholder Boards Across the PCOR Trajectory

Attendees will draft a plan to engage blended stakeholder boards across the lifecycle of a research project. Blended stakeholder boards include the diverse perspectives of patients and other populations (which can include hard to reach populations like minorities and children), caregivers, healthcare leaders, providers, and disease advocates.

• **Format:** Two interactive workshops (2 hours each) with optional pre-workshop assignments and post workshop mentoring on individual proposals.

• **When and Where:** Jan 19 and Mar 8; 4-6 pm (workshop); 6-7 pm (optional PCOR application consult); 1309 HSLC, welcome to attend one or both.

• **Registration, Information, Questions?** Contact Thuy Dan Tran at tran4@ pediatrics.wisc.edu (ictr.wisc.edu/pcortraining#hide1)

Foundations for Successfully Engaging Hard-To-Reach Patient Stakeholders

This highly interactive workshop provides a detailed roadmap for meaningful engagement of diverse patient stakeholders in PCOR and community effectiveness research. Each learner will develop a personalized one-year plan to engage “not the usual suspects,” e.g., racial/ethnic minorities, low-income/literacy groups, and youth.

• **Format:** One 2-hour workshop. Hands-on session with templates, checklists, and prototypes.

• **When and Where:** Feb 25; 4-6 pm; 2305 Cooper Hall

• **Registration, Information, Questions?** Contact Betty Kaiser at bkaiser@wisc.edu (ictr.wisc.edu/pcortraining#hide2)

Forming and Sustaining Multi-Stakeholder Panels

Embracing the 7P framework for stakeholder engagement (www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22528615), this seminar series offers foundational and practical content related to forming and sustaining multi-stakeholder panels, e.g., providers, purchasers, payers, policy makers, product makers, principal investigators, and patients. Researchers are also invited to submit PCOR proposals for feedback/consultation prior to each lecture.

• **Format:** Series of five 60-minute seminars offered over several months. May attend any or all lectures.

• **Registration, Information, Questions?** Contact Nicole Brys at nabrys@wisc.edu (ictr.wisc.edu/pcortraining#hide3)

Deeply Engaging Patients Through a Mix and Match of Methods

This online training offers six modules related to deeply engaging patient stakeholders. Beyond advisory boards, this training explores multiple ways to engage patient stakeholders, including expanding roles of patients and their families on the research team. This training is particularly relevant for researchers focusing on the active involvement of patients in improving health services or focusing on sensitive topics.

• **Format:** Online asynchronous training module including templates to download, videos, resources, and literature references. July 2016 launch online.

• **Registration, Information, Questions?** Contact Sarah Davis at sarah.davis@wisc.edu (ictr.wisc.edu/pcortraining#hide4)

### Collaborating Partner Programs

PCOR training activities at UW ICTR were developed as a collaborative effort with five ICTR Community-Academic Partnerships core programs. In addition to NIH support from the ICTR Clinical and Translational Science Award, these activities are supported by the UW School of Medicine and Public Health via the Wisconsin Partnership Program.
The UW ICTR Graduate Program in Clinical Investigation (GPCI) welcomes six scholars this fall for a total of 30 students; 13 PhD students and seven MS students, plus 10 students in other programs earning a PhD minor in Clinical Investigation are enrolled. Since 2008, the program has contributed to the ICTR mandate from NIH to train the future biomedical workforce.

The Clinical Investigation degree focuses on training clinician scientists and other health professionals who can lead or contribute to patient-oriented research teams comprised of people from inside and outside of their own scientific disciplines.

The GPCI provides a complement to existing areas of clinical research training offered by the Department of Population Health Sciences and other academic programs throughout campus and Marshfield Clinic.

Christine Sorkness, PharmD, ICTR senior associate executive director, comments, “The Clinical Investigation program is unique on campus in that it is an applied degree for clinical and translational research. While basic research is part of the translational spectrum, our degree is ultimately focused on applying research and basic discovery to communities – patients and populations.”

She continues, “Once we admit a student to the Clinical Investigation degree program, we are committed to their success. Faculty who work with the program are dedicated to supporting our students, who are typically very busy, full time health professionals. In addition, because of the ICTR association with the National Research Mentoring Network, we have access to best practices in mentoring diverse clinical and translational researchers.”

“As a consequence, many of our students ‘self advance’ by starting as master’s students and then continue to get the PhD, or by entering as a certificate or special student and converting subsequently to the master’s program. We are here to support each individual and their unique career needs,” Sorkness concludes.

This year’s incoming students represent the Departments of Communication Sciences & Disorders (L&S), Biostatistics and Medical Informatics (SMPH), Surgery (SMPH), Statistics (L&S), Medicine (SMPH), and the School of Pharmacy.

**How to Apply to the Graduate Program in Clinical Investigation**

An overview of the application process is found online ([ictr.wisc.edu/GraduateProgram](http://ictr.wisc.edu/GraduateProgram)). The deadline for MS and PhD applications is Feb 1 for entry in the fall.

In contrast, forms are accepted year-round for declaring a PhD minor in Clinical Investigation or pursuing a Certificate in the Fundamentals of Clinical Research, another clinical research training option sponsored by ICTR ([ictr.wisc.edu/CertificatePrograms](http://ictr.wisc.edu/CertificatePrograms)).

Information about tuition and fees, guidelines for international students, and more is available through the UW-Madison Graduate School at [grad.wisc.edu/admissions/](http://grad.wisc.edu/admissions/).

For more information, please contact Sally Wedde, rec-education@hslc.wisc.edu or check online ([ictr.wisc.edu/GraduateProgram](http://ictr.wisc.edu/GraduateProgram)). The graduate program is administered by the ICTR Research Education and Career Development core.