



## **NETWORK UPDATE**

### **January 2009**

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

On December 8, 2008, the NIH Protocol Review Committee approved Version 2.0 of the Vitamin D3 Protocol. The next steps are to await approval by the Data Safety Monitoring Board (DSMB) on January 26, 2009, as well as submission by the study teams to and approval from their IRB's at Morehouse, Charles Drew and Jackson State.

#### **New Project: RTRN To Receive Clinical Research Network Feasibility Award (CRNFA)**

The RTRN Data Technology Coordinating Center (DTCC) in conjunction with Duke University Medical Center and the Duke Translational Medicine Institute are the recipients of the Clinical Research Network Feasibility Award (CRNFA). The team's proposal, "Feasibility and Economic Evaluation of Standards-based Interoperability between Investigational Sites and Clinical Research Network Data Centers," was one of only six to receive the competitive award.

The funding mechanism is as a subcontractor to Westat's NIH Inventory and Evaluation of Clinical Research Networks contract with the NIH. The project will begin February 1, 2009 and continue for one-year.

#### **Steering Committee and Subcommittees**

The Steering Committee and Subcommittees met this past December during the RCMI Symposium. After morning subcommittee sessions, the Subcommittee Chairs/Co-chairs presented discussion highlights of short-term and long-term plans to the Steering Committee. The presentations delivered by the various RTRN Subcommittees during the November 30 Steering Committee Meeting are posted and available for viewing at [www.rtrn.net](http://www.rtrn.net). In addition, a new subcommittee, Translational Informatics, was approved for formation by the Steering Committee.

The newly formed Translational Informatics Subcommittee has as its primary goal to maximize informatics capabilities throughout RTRN. Their short term goals include: examining the NCRR Strategic Plan and providing insight and direction to RTRN Steering Committee on Informatics aspects; establishing organizational structure of the Subcommittee, and identifying informatics resources and needs of RTRN. The long term goals will focus on engaging Informatics Community within RTRN; providing mechanisms for the RTRN to engage the broader informatics community; working closely with informatics Working Groups to establish priorities that will align with RTRN priorities; and establishing and implementing a unique RTRN Translational Informatics Workforce Development System.

For more information about the Translational Informatics Subcommittee, contact Dr. Raphael Isokpehi at [Raphael.isokpehi@jsums.edu](mailto:Raphael.isokpehi@jsums.edu) or visit [www.rtrn.net](http://www.rtrn.net).

Several members of the RTRN Ethics and Regulatory (E&R) Subcommittee attended the Society of Research Subjects Advocates (SRSA) annual meeting which was held via web conference on Thursday, December 11. The group made a formal presentation that introduced members of the SRSA to RTRN, highlighted the partnership of RTRN with the Jackson Heart Study, the ethical and regulatory issues involved in data sharing, how the JHS actively involved community resources and the resulting successful relationship. Dr. Donna Antoine LaVigne, Coordinator of the Community Partnership/Outreach Office of the Jackson Heart Study and members of both the E&R and Community Engagement Subcommittees, joined Zoe Hammatt (RTRN Regulatory Specialist and E&R Subcommittee Co-chair) and E&R Subcommittee members Winifred Smith and Sharon Malehorn in the presentation. Dr. LaVigne plans to discuss many of these same issues with the Community Engagement Subcommittee at their next meeting. The Ethics and Regulatory Subcommittee SRSA presentation is available on [www.rtrn.net](http://www.rtrn.net).

**REMINDER:** Subcommittees should submit the following:

- Minutes/notes from the Hawaii November 30 subcommittee meeting
- Name of the meeting recorder
- Planned meeting dates and format (teleconference, videoconference or webex, etc) for the next 6 -12 months
- Updated member list w/ assigned Chair & Co-chair and Community member
- Succession plan/length of term of office for Chair & Co-Chair

We are working to ensure this information is accurately posted to the RTRN web site.

### Working Groups

The 11th RCMI International Symposium on Health Disparities was held in Sheraton Waikiki Hotel, Hawaii from December 1 to 4, 2008. The RTRN Bioinformatics & Computational Biology Working Group in collaboration with the Data Technology Coordinating Center (DTCC) organized a morning Plenary Session on Wednesday December 3 on HealthGrid followed by an afternoon session on the activities of the RTRN Bioinformatics and Computational Biology Working Group.

The Morning Plenary Session on HealthGrid was moderated by Dr. Edwina Barnett, Program Director of the DTCC. The Keynote Speaker was Professor Peter J. Hunter, Director of The Bioengineering Institute, University of Auckland, New Zealand. Other panelists were Dr. Howard Bilofsky (HealthGrid.US and University of Pennsylvania), Mary Kratz (HealthGrid.US and University of Michigan), Dr. Jose Conde (University of Puerto Rico) and Yannick Legre (President of HealthGrid Association).

Dr. Howard Bilofsky briefly introduced the HealthGrid and highlighted the benefits of developing grid infrastructure for the RTRN that enhance research in health disparities. Professor Hunter's spoke on The Physiome Project which is a worldwide public domain effort to provide a computational framework for understanding human and other eukaryotic physiology.

*A detailed report on the RTRN Bioinformatics Working Group activities as well as the Translational Informatics Subcommittee activities which occurred during the RCMI Symposium will be available on the RTRN web site.*

## Translational Research Clusters

During the December RCMI Symposium, RTRN hosted a reception to introduce the community to the translational research cluster leadership and to provide additional information to those interested in joining one or more of the six clusters: HIV, Cardiovascular, Neuroscience, Obesity/Metabolic, Cancer and Community. The great interest from the community has resulted in a vast pool of researchers to populate the clusters. Currently, a database of those interested is being compiled. This information will be forwarded to the cluster leadership who will begin to contact individuals about upcoming meetings and opportunities to work with the collective.

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

- Staff of the DTCC Information Security and Technology Integration (ISTI) division introduced the RCMI community to the Network's Clinical Data Management System (CDMS) through hands-on sessions held during this year's RCMI Symposium. The group also conducted training sessions to enhance the members of the Steering Committee and Subcommittee's use of the secure RTRN Portal.

ISTI division presented a paper at the RCMI Symposium on "Building Capacity to Facilitate Collaborative Clinical Research in Minority Institutions".

Additional ISTI divisional activities include supporting the Vitamin D3 Pilot Study. The division has completely built and tested the study in the development environment. A Gap Analysis was done on January 12, 2009 for the CDMS to ensure Part 21 CFR part 11 Compliance. In addition, the DTCC completed HIPAA compliant training on January 12, 2009.

- The DTCC Biostatistical division will host its second webinar in the BIOSTATISTICS SEMINAR SERIES on February 18, 2009 at 2pm CST. The presenter, Dr. Jimmy Efrid, University of Hawaii, will discuss computing power and sample size. Additional information will be available at [http://www.rtrn.net/news/special\\_announcements.htm](http://www.rtrn.net/news/special_announcements.htm).

## RTRN Activities

- In 2008, RTRN established real estate on the network's web site to highlight the notable speakers presenting at the RCMI institutions. It is our focus to promote and give great attention to these special guests. We are encouraging all the RCMI sites to forward details about their upcoming speaking engagements. We are interested in those that the RCMI scientists are participating in as well as invited guests coming to the institutions. Announcements will be posted under the **DISTINGUISHED LECTURE SERIES** and distributed throughout the RTRN community. Information can be submitted via e-mail to [communications@rtrn.net](mailto:communications@rtrn.net).

## RCMI Center Announcements

**UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO**— The University of Puerto Rico, Medical Sciences Campus has been approved for a **\$15 million Endowment Program**. This program is sponsored by the National Institutes of Health, **National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities** Endowment Program for Increasing Research and Institutional Resources Capacity in Section 736 Health Professions Schools.

Estela S. Estape, Dean of the School of Health Professions and director of the UPR clinical research education and career development programs ( CRECD) is one of the PI's together with Walter Frontera, Dean of the UPR School of Medicine and CRECD Co-Director and Dr Jose R. Carlo, Medical Sciences Campus Chancellor.

The "HISPANICS-IN-RESEARCH CAPABILITY: SoHP & SoM Partnership (HIREC)" Endowment will expand the health disparities research capacities of the Medical Sciences Campus in mental health, respiratory, metabolic and cardiovascular diseases with a special focus on disease prevention and early diagnosis throughout the lifespan . During the first 5 years, the HIREC Endowment program will target these four health conditions of high priority to the Hispanic population as delineated by Healthy People 2010 and the mortality and morbidity trends in Puerto Rico. Faculty and students will focus on research studies specifically related to **autism, asthma, diabetes, and stroke**.

**HUNTER COLLEGE, CUNY** -- The **22<sup>nd</sup> annual symposium of the Center for Study of Gene Structure and Function at Hunter College, CUNY** will be held on **Thursday, January 22, 2009**, in Room 714 Hunter West Building. The symposium entitled "Translational Cancer Research: Bench, Bedside and Community" will be held in collaboration with the Clinical Translational Science Center. Weill Cornell Medical College (WCMC) is the lead institution in this CTSC and Hunter College Gene Center, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center (MCKCC), and the Hospital for Special Surgery are major partners.

Here is the link to the symposium poster: <http://cancersymposium.hunter.cuny.edu/CancerPoster.pdf>. Further details of the symposium are available at: <http://cancersymposium.hunter.cuny.edu>

This Network Update has been prepared for the RTRN community to keep you abreast of network milestones and the numerous activities of the RCMI centers. We will distribute these updates on a monthly basis. **Please provide comments and/or suggestions to [communications@rtrn.net](mailto:communications@rtrn.net)**. Continue to visit [www.rtrn.net](http://www.rtrn.net) for additional news and information.