



Bringing Research Advances More Quickly to Patients

Community engagement is a critical element in the translational research process and one that NCCR has supported for many years. The advent of the Clinical and Translational Science Awards (CTSA) consortium has led to the development of new and far-reaching opportunities that encourage community involvement and, thus, will bring research advances more quickly and efficiently to patients.

For instance, programs at the University of Pittsburgh, the University of California, Davis (two CTSA recipients), and Meharry Medical College (a participant in NCCR's Research Centers in Minority Institutions program as well as a partner in a CTSA to Vanderbilt University) illustrate the importance of involving the community as full partners in the research process. These programs, described in this issue's cover story, successfully demonstrate the critical need to ensure the diversity of the research team, involve members of *all* communities in the research process, and address cultural differences for each population included in a study.

The importance of community-based physicians and nurses cannot be overstated. A new initiative, highlighted on the CTSA in Focus page, supports networks of community-based medical providers who are qualified, trained, and eager to participate in research studies. Through this initiative, NIH has awarded funding to four members of the CTSA consortium to determine the feasibility and value of establishing such networks.

The principal investigators of the CTSA consortium gathered recently—as part of an NCCR Advisory Council meeting—to describe their successes and challenges since joining the consortium in 2006. Many of the grantees' accomplishments have focused on reaching out to their communities and developing resources to facilitate and encourage patient involvement. The highlights from the presentations are covered in the News section.

Community engagement also continues to be the focus of NCCR activities this spring. I encourage you to attend the CTSA-sponsored workshop entitled "Accelerating the Dissemination and Translation of Clinical Research into Practice" on May 9. Information on the workshop is provided on page 3 and on the NCCR Web site at www.nih.ncrr.gov.

NCCR grantees have made great strides in fully engaging their communities in the research process. I hope you will share our excitement in learning about their current and future efforts.

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