

Enhancing Translational Research at Rutgers: Bridging the Gap Between Discovery and Real-World Applications.



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Abstract:

Rutgers NJMS has secured \$150MM in NIH funding over the past several years. Despite these advances, there remains a disconnect between the clinicians and the researchers that study basic mechanisms of disease. This disconnect limits translational research opportunities and has also resulted in challenges retaining and recruiting faculty that wish to pursue studies of this nature. The main problem contributing to these challenges is that basic researchers and clinicians are often siloed and have few chances to interact and exchange ideas. Therefore, efforts are needed to foster collaborations between physicians and basic researchers. After discussing these challenges with leaders at NJMS, one issue we identified was that there are few formal settings that allow clinicians and basic scientists to discuss ideas and foster relationships. For my project, I propose that we institute a translational research retreat comprised of clinicians and scientists that share interest in pursuing collaborative studies.

Primary Stakeholders:

- Basic Researchers
- Clinicians
- Medical School Trainees
- Department Chairs
- Center and Institute Directors
- Deans Office

Key Steps/Activities:

- Create a diverse organizing committee that represents the interests of both researchers and clinicians.
- Develop and distribute a short survey gauging the interest and goals of participants.
- Work with Deans and Department Chairs to message their desire for faculty to participate in the retreat.
- Choose a list of speakers and create a program (based on the results of the survey and identified areas of interest).
- Secure a venue with IT support and catering services.

Effectiveness Measures:

- Event attendance.
- Event satisfaction survey.
- Increases in IRB submissions and amendments.
- Increases in translation publications including both clinicians and basic scientists as authors.
- Increases grant submissions that include translational components.
- Increased NIH funding to support translation studies at NJMS.

Communication/Engagement:

- We will leverage existing email lists to initiate communication.
- We will engage Deans and Department Chairs to further motivate participation.
- We will distribute pre- and post-meeting surveys to identify the goals of the participants and to gauge their satisfaction with the event.
- We leverage Department and Center reporting on publications, grants submissions and grant awards to help measure the success of the program.

Proposed Timeline:

- The Event Committee will be established in the Fall of 2023 with surveys sent prior to winter break (following established timelines for spring events).
- The first retreat will take place in the Spring of 2024.

Current Status/Future Directions:

- Secured support from the Dean's Office.
- Currently meeting with event coordinators at NJMS and gauging interest in committee participation.
- Planning meetings with Department Chairs to promote participation (future).
- Establish program and secure event venue (future).