

August 28, 2017

Dear CTSA Program Hub Leaders, Investigators, and Staff,

We want to take this moment for us to collectively rise above the work of the Common Metrics Initiative and thank you for your participation in this groundbreaking project. The Common Metrics Initiative has been underway for two years and we are preparing to move to the next phase. We know this has required extensions of your work and trust beyond what you might have expected, and we are deeply appreciative for all your effort. In doing this, you have become the first national network to demonstrate it is possible to get into the granular work of improving NIH's largest national research program. It has been pioneering work, and as such, you have helped define what this work can and will become. Thank you very much!

At this point, we have implemented three Common Metrics across all the CTSA Program hubs, and the trial accrual metric is being piloted. Hub teams have been trained in how to collect these metrics, use the Results Based Accountability framework to develop strategic management plans, and to thereby improve their performance based on their own circumstances and objectives.

One thing many of you have asked for is the ability to share data and information, and compare yourself to the experience and performance of other hubs. However, there are concerns about how this should best be done, confidentiality, and how data would be used. We all felt the first thing to do was gain experience using the metrics, and then, in a deliberate, collaborative, and transparent way, create best practices for sharing data nationally. It is now time to start this very substantial process. This work will be done at the new CTSA Program Coordinating Center, the University of Rochester Center for Leading Innovation and Collaboration (CLIC).

As you know, Tufts CTSI was asked by NCATS to assist in the development and implementation of the first three Common Metrics and piloting the new accrual metric, which will be done at the end of this calendar year. We have greatly valued and depended on the collaborative and trusting relationship established among the Tufts Common Metrics Implementation team, the CTSA Program hubs, and NCATS. Tufts has taken very seriously their responsibility to facilitate the implementation of common metrics and ensure the confidentiality of information and data they have been privy to during this process.

Now it is time to begin transitioning the responsibility of common metrics – including development, implementation, training, technical assistance, data cleaning, etc. to CLIC. Their expertise and role as the CTSA Program Coordinating Center will bring this work to the next level, which we are excited to see. CLIC will spend the next few months shadowing Tufts to learn about the processes currently being used. Performing these functions requires that CLIC have the same administrative rights to access information in the ScoreCard platform currently held by Tufts. We plan to provide CLIC with these administrative rights by the end of August so they can join us in this important work. NCATS will not have access to

identifiable hub information but will continue to receive the same reports Tufts has provided regarding hub-specific issues implementing metrics and completing data entry. By sharing this transition plan, we are confirming our commitment to you to be completely transparent about who has access to common metrics data and how it is being used.

In addition, NCATS, CLIC, and Tufts have been working on a Data Governance document for the Common Metrics Initiative. This document clearly articulates who has access to the data, for what purposes, and how confidentiality of individual hubs will be protected. This document will be vetted by several groups including the Common Metrics Executive Committee, CTSA Program Steering Committee, and the CTSA Program Investigators. Our hope is to have this document circulated to everyone for review and comment, and in place by the end of September.

It has been a privilege and a great learning experience to work on the Common Metrics Initiative. We appreciate all your work on this project and the trust you have placed in us to develop a data-driven process for improving the impact of the CTSA Program. Redonna will remain the lead for the Common Metrics Initiative at NCATS as Tufts begins a transition process to CLIC that will be completed by the end of this year. NCATS and CLIC will continue to rely on Harry, Denise and the Tufts team even after the transition is complete.

Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

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