

CTSA Communications Workgroup Meeting Summary

June 18, 2008 2 PM-4 PM ET

Attendees: G. Earle, Albert Einstein; T. Fogg, Rochester; K. Kidd, NCCR, D. Timpane, NCCR; C. Thompson, Case Western; D. Eichmann, Iowa, C. Kelleher, OHSU; K. Anderson, UC Davis; M. Kahlon, UCSF; P. Hodgson, Duke; L. Holmes, Weill Cornell; A. Lively, Hopkins; R. Simpson, UNC; L. Weisel, Harvard; B. Neal, Harvard; B. Barnett, Indiana University; J. Allen, Washington University; S. Byars, NIH; A. Greene, NIMH; S. Pollard, NCCR; A. Hayward, NCCR; L. O'Fallon, NIEHS; T. LaMotte, NCCR; H. Falk-Krzesinski, Northwestern University; M. McDonald, Pittsburgh; B. LaSalle, University of Utah; P. Watkins, UNC; I. Parvanova, Mayo; J. Molli, Pennsylvania, J. Goldstein, BAH; Others not identified in Adobe Connect

I. Welcome (Kameha Kidd and Tom Fogg)

CTSA Chair Tom Fogg and NIH Coordinator Kameha Kidd provided the welcome for the Communications Workgroup quarterly web meeting.

II Introduction: New members (New institutions)

New members of the Workgroup from new CTSA institutions introduced themselves. New members included: Gordon Earle of Albert Einstein, Yeshiva University, Laura Weisel and Bob Neal of Harvard University, Bill Barnett of Indiana University, Holly Falk-Krzesinski of Northwestern University and Bernie LaSalle of the University of Utah.

III. Operations Committee Report (Tom Fogg)

CTSA Chair, Tom Fogg gave a brief overview of the Communications Workgroup Operations Committee. The Communications Operations Committee is a small group drawn from the membership of the Communications Workgroup. The committee oversees workgroup business between the quarterly meetings and meets on a regular monthly basis via teleconference. Recent topics of discussion include the administrative supplements, which are grants available to CTSA institutions to conduct consortium wide activities. Each group may submit two proposals. The Communications Workgroup received three proposals and has since narrowed the proposals down to two after the proposals were presented to the principal investigator, (PI) liaisons during a web meeting. The goals of the workgroup have also recently been addressed by the

operations committee as well as a need to identify a way to facilitate communication with the PI liaisons. Several members of the Communications Workgroup recently had the opportunity to participate in the April Chicago meeting of the Consortium Oversight Committee, (COC). The Communications Workgroup was an agenda item, and presentations were made regarding future plans for the workgroup and work recently completed. Presentations were also made regarding activities at the three CTSA institutions of the University of California-San Francisco, the University of Rochester, and the University of Pittsburgh. Two key decisions from the meeting include plans for the development of a strategic plan in conjunction with the PI liaisons and the development of improved communication mechanisms with the PIs. In closing, Tom requested that those from the new CTSA cohort interested in becoming part of the Operations Group submit their names to Kameha or himself.

IV. Taskforce Reports

a.) Communication Systems and Information Management (Kent Anderson)

Kent Anderson explained that the taskforce has taken an informatics oriented approach to communications and presently meets monthly via teleconference. Two subgroups, Inventory of Communications Challenges and the Calendar Integration have been created. The Inventory of Communications Challenges is led by Mini Kahlon and Chris Kelleher. The goal of the group is to create a “marketplace” of communications-related information. It will be a web resource that allows users to browse available tools among institutions as well as institutional needs. This concept has been further developed through the administrative supplements proposals process. The Calendar Integration subgroup, has proposed the definition of a common set of event types and categorization schemes. Local calendar systems from participating institutions will highlight events at these institutions concerning clinical and translational science. This concept has also been developed and submitted through the administrative supplements proposals process.

b.) Media / Public Relations Taskforce (Ina Parvanova and Joyce McDonald)

Joyce McDonald of NCR, introduced Ina Parvanova of the Mayo Clinic as the new co-chair of the taskforce while thanking Lara Kalaftis of Case Western University for her service to the taskforce. Updates regarding the taskforce included the addition of fourteen new CTSA grantees and the new consortium member rollout process that began in May. The rollout was a success due to the public affairs/communications representatives at each of the CTSA sites. The goal has been to attract attention to the overall efforts of the consortium. A recent article in the Nature publication last week highlighted efforts concerning translational science. The News Hour has also demonstrated an interest in consortium efforts, and having strong ties between NCR and the CTSA Institution media contacts is critical to ensuring the consortium can maximize these media opportunities.

There are currently several efforts being pursued by the taskforce. The communications toolkit available to consortium members via CTSAWeb.org was reviewed. The

communications toolkit, is a valuable resource which contains a CTSA descriptive “blurb” which may be used for all news releases regarding the consortium. The description contains standard language that may be tailored for individual sites. Currently, a list of CTSA contacts at the various site locations is being assembled, in order that contacts may be supplied to news reporters for requested interviews. These contacts are also posted on the toolkit page. The goal will be to coordinate with CTSA members and PIs at the various institutions to easily identify the appropriate contacts when editors or producers are scouting out stories. An additional effort has been the collection of vignettes or short stories about activities being undertaken at the various institutions. The taskforce has worked to develop a schedule for the voluntary submission of vignettes every two months. Vignettes may be submitted through the designated Communications Workgroup Wiki space or to Joyce McDonald and Kameha Kidd. The submissions provide great ideas for articles in the NCRR Reporter, a magazine that may be obtained on the web or in print form. Other projects include possible media ads, which were first introduced as an administrative supplements proposal. The ads encourage the participation of the community in clinical and translational science.

V. Administrative Supplements (Mini Kahlon/Chris Kelleher, Kent Anderson and David Eichmann)

a.) Review of accepted proposals

CTSA Share Center

Mini Kahlon and Chris Kelleher presented their concept, the CTSA Share Center to the workgroup. Mini and Chris explained the compatibility of this concept with the consortium priority for the creation of a national inventory of resources in clinical and translational science. There is a need for leveraging existing resources within the CTSA Consortium and reducing duplicative efforts. The main points of focus include: mapping closely to behaviors and habits as they currently exist, the development of a system that evolves constantly in response to user needs and the exploration of ways to incentivize sharing. The specific aims in the context of this project include the development and testing of a prototype and the associated processes as well as the evaluation of the pilot process and dissemination of key observations to the CTSA Consortium Oversight Committee. The goal is to develop a system that will evolve in response to user needs rather than employing a top down organizational structure. An advisory board will aid in scoping out and testing the tool. This proposal was formally approved by the PI liaisons earlier this month.

The Calendar Integration System is designed to combat the problem of an inability to maintain an awareness of events at various institutions at various levels. Currently there is an abundance of information and information overload. The system would allow users to track the information they need or want to track. One obvious barrier is that most people already use calendars such as Lotus and Google calendars. The proposal establishes a set of intercommunicating calendar services. A hierarchy of calendars will be developed that may be subscribed to by user request. This hierarchy may be at the CTSA Consortium level including steering committee and at the workgroup level.

CTSA events included in the calendars may include key function meetings. This proposal was also formally approved by the PI Liaisons earlier this month.

VI. Developing a communication mechanism for the PIs

The Communications Workgroup will need to develop some solutions to addressing the need to communicate with the PIs. Currently, there is an overload of information and there may be a need to identify a more effective mode of communicating key pieces of information to the PIs. One suggestion was the development of an e-mail newsletter. The newsletter would provide brief updates containing two bullet-point highlights from the various steering committees and workgroups. The newsletter could potentially be organized according to two sections. One section would have the individual institutional updates while the other would have highlights from the entire consortium. The Workgroup will continue to work on addressing this need. After some discussion, the group agreed to solicit input from the PIs, in order to assess what would prove to be most helpful to them. Communication Workgroup members were encouraged to inform their PIs about their needs and the need for support of communications activities. While CTSAweb.org, the Wiki and the newsletter provide a concrete purpose, more resources may be needed. Information needs to be provided in a compact form in one location. Tom Fogg requested that members submit these suggestions to him to compile by July 16, 2008.

VII. Audiences and goals of the Communications Workgroup

In defining the scope of the work for the Communications Workgroup, four audiences and the desired goals associated with the audiences were defined. The four audiences are: the NIH and institutional leadership, CTSA communications leadership, the public at large, state and federal policymakers and professional advocacy organizations. While discussing the audiences and goals, differentiations were made between inter and intra audiences. Intra communications were explained to be within the institution while inter was explained to be looking externally to other institutions. It was noted that while consortium communication activities would not focus on intra communications to the same extent that the institutions would, there should be some consideration for these audiences (institution researchers) reflected in the audiences and goals of the Communications Workgroup. Tom Fogg will revisit the audiences and goals to better reflect this, as well as prepare a brief introduction into the concept of the consortiums audiences and goals document. The list of audiences will be visited again in one year.

VIII. Discussion: CTSAWeb.org

The theme for the quarterly web meeting is the CTSAWeb.org website. The website was originally more operational and served to help disseminate information. The organization of the website is aligned according to both the short and long term focus. While briefly reviewing the organization of the website, it was explained that common language was applied to the website and that the left side of the page is the operational component while the top menu consists of various helpful links that help showcase the

consortium. Short term initiatives for improving the site include assessment of the website by a third party to evaluate accessibility, presentation of material and how audiences are accommodated. The content is constantly being updated and shaped. Listening and needs assessment are an ongoing effort. A Google search feature will likely be added that will link all of the CTSA institutions and will help users find them with one search. Some institutions are easily found while others are not as easily found through this search function. Indexing may be adjusted to correct for these issues. Featured institutions that appear in the newsletter will also be showcased on the site. There may be enhanced ways to showcase institutions and promote collaboration and messaging to audiences. Some other potential long term initiatives include adding a message board, making the site more interactive and adding a more sophisticated system to access information about CTSA activities beyond the Google search tool. Suggestions from the workgroup include making the website more visually interesting and adding photography of clinical shots and including information that is more publicly focused. Future actions concerning the website include workgroup members contributing suggestions about the website.

Action Items:

#	Action Items	Owner	Due Date
1	Submit suggestions to Tom Fogg for facilitating communication with PIs	Workgroup members	7/16/08
2	Submit suggestions to Kameha Kidd for CTSAweb.org	Workgroup members	On going
3	Send press contacts to Joyce McDonald	Workgroup members	On going