Request for Applications

IMPACT Funding Opportunity Number: RFA-IMPACT-22-HCS-02

Health Care Systems Scholars Program

Embed researchers in health care organizations or systems to strengthen partnerships to conduct embedded pragmatic clinical trials (ePCTs) to improve dementia care.

KEY DATES:

Request for Applications – Released
January 10, 2022

Informational Webinar
January 20, 2022 @ 1:15pm ET

Letters of Intent Due – Required
February 8, 2022 @ 5pm ET

Letters of Intent – Notification
March 8, 2022

Full Applications Due – By invitation only
April 18, 2022 @ 5pm ET

Applicant Notified of Decisions
May 16, 2022

Award Start Date
June 27, 2022

2022
The National Institute on Aging (NIA) Imbedded Pragmatic Alzheimer’s Disease and Alzheimer’s Disease-Related Dementias (AD/ADRD) Clinical Trials (IMPACT) Collaboratory (U54AG063546) was established in 2019 to build the nation’s capacity to conduct pragmatic clinical trials (ePCTs) of non-pharmacological interventions embedded within health care organizations and systems to improve the care of people living with AD/ADRD (PLWD) and their care partners (CP).

The NIA IMPACT Collaboratory is launching a second round of its Health Care Systems (HCS) Scholars Program. This program offers mid-level to senior researchers an opportunity to develop ePCTs with health care or systems interested in improving the care provided to PLWD and their CP. Throughout health care organizations, PLWD present unique challenges to care delivery for which the standard practice model doesn’t work. PLWD incur higher costs, require more time during primary care visits, and have more avoidable hospital and emergency department visits. While health care organizations recognize these challenges, the constant pressures of providing care make it difficult to change the way care is delivered to this population and to overcome system-level issues.

The goals of the HCS Scholars Program are to embed a researcher in a health care organization or system for 12 months to:

1. Foster a mutually beneficial partnership between a researcher and health care organization or system with the aim of conducting ePCT research to improve the care of PLWD and their CP

2. Train investigators about the complexities of conducting research in health care settings and obtain on-the-ground knowledge about how new research programs are successfully introduced at all levels of the organization (e.g., front-line providers to executive leaders)

3. Engage health care settings in learning about what it means to conduct ePCTs, to assist in identifying and prioritizing opportunities for improvement in dementia care, and potentially conducting an evaluation of related quality improvement projects

Applicants are expected to apply with a health care organization or system with which they have an existing relationship. Examples of health care settings include but are not limited to: large integrated health systems; academic medical centers; payers (i.e. Medicare Advantage plans); CVS/Walgreens; Optum; and other acute, post-acute, long-term care, and community care settings that provide care for PLWD and their CP. Examples of potential program activities include: meetings with health care staff at multiple levels to understand barriers and facilitators in providing care for PLWD and their CP, building relationships with staff at multiple sites across an organization, conducting analysis of administrative data to characterize the care provided to PLWD, and/or evaluating an ongoing pilot program that has been implemented. Successful applications will clearly define the mutual benefit of the program for both the researcher and HCS. At nine months into the program, a draft specific aims page targeting a potential submission to the IMPACT Collaboratory Pilot Program, Demonstration Projects or other funding mechanism (R01, R61/R33) will be due. Scholars will be assigned to and meet monthly with an IMPACT Collaboratory HCS Core advisor to monitor progress and make connections as needed within IMPACT. Placement may be in-person or virtual.
Priority Areas for RFA-IMPACT-22-HCS-02

All applications that include a mutually beneficial partnership between a researcher and health care organization or system with the aim of conducting ePCT research to improve the care of PLWD and their CP through non-pharmacological interventions will be considered. However, this grant cycle will prioritize applications that include partnerships with health care organizations and systems that:

- Provide care to underrepresented populations (e.g., minorities, rural communities)
- Are new to the IMPACT Collaboratory and have not already partnered with our network. Please reach out to Rachel.J.Hays@kp.org if you are unsure of an organization’s status.

Informational Webinar

An optional informational webinar about the program will be hosted by the HCS Core to provide investigators with an overview of program and application details. Investigators will have the opportunity to ask questions. Pre-registration is required using the link below.

- **January 20, 2022 at 1:15 PM ET:** Register here for webinar.

The informational webinar will be recorded and posted online at https://impactcollaboratory.org/HCS-scholars/.

Frequently Asked Questions

A set of frequently asked questions (FAQ) regarding this program are available at https://impactcollaboratory.org/HCS-Scholars-faq/.

Award Information

Awards are for one year, up to $120,000 in direct costs with an indirect cost rate capped at 8% and start date of June 27, 2022. Budget details can be found below.

Eligibility

Mid-level and senior investigators are encouraged to apply. Scholars are expected to have received prior R01 or equivalent award funding. Applicants may hold a faculty or research scientist position at an academic institution or be an investigator embedded within a HCS within the United States. No research may be performed outside of the United States.

Applicants must be citizens or permanent residents of the United States. Applicants from under-represented racial and ethnic groups as well as individuals with disabilities are strongly encouraged to apply.

How to Apply

**There is a competitive two-step application process:**

Interested applicants are required to submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) form here. LOIs may be submitted on a rolling basis but no later than February 8, 2022 at 5 pm ET.

**STEP 1: LETTER OF INTENT**

You must complete the LOI Smartsheet submission form, including uploads of the applicant’s NIH Biosketch and a PDF form with the following short statements (200 words or less) that describe:

1. Your interests and aspirations related to non-pharmacological interventions to improve dementia care and ePCTs, and experience developing relationships with an HCS
2. A description of your health care setting partner, your relationship and past activities together, how the partnership is mutually beneficial, and a description of the population they serve (including estimates of underrepresented populations)

3. How your work could impact PLWD and CPs

4. Your goals for participating in the HCS Scholars program and anticipated outcomes (e.g., IMPACT pilot grant application)

No budget information is required for the LOI step. LOI decisions will be provided on or before March 8, 2022.

**STEP 2: FULL PROPOSALS BY INVITATION ONLY**

Candidates selected for further consideration will be invited to submit a full application due no later than April 18, 2022 at 5 pm ET.

**Smartsheet Application:** Full applications will be submitted online using a Smartsheet form similar to the LOI form. Access to the HCS Scholars application will be provided to those invited to submit full proposals.

**Proposal Content:**
Full applications will include the following sections, with each item 1-6 not to exceed one page (6 pages total, Arial Font 11):

1. Aims/Goals for Participation in the HCS Scholars Program
2. Investigator Background and Career Goals
3. Health Care Organization Background, Description of AD/ADRD Populations Served (including diversity), Key Challenges in Caring for Them, and Mutually Beneficial Goals for Partnering
4. Proposed Activities Including Partnering Plan
5. Timeline & Milestones
6. Future Directions
7. Letters of Support *(not included in page limits)*
   a. A letter of support is required from a leader within the proposed health care organization or system. The letter should provide a statement indicating the health care settings commitment to ePCT research that aligns with its priorities, commitment to the scholar, an overview of AD/ADRD population they serve, the specific proposed program activities (e.g., meetings with individuals in the health care setting, use of data), and their goals for participating in the program.
   b. A letter of support is required from the applicant’s supervisor (e.g., Department Chair) that addresses the applicant’s commitment to conducting AD/ADRD research in HCS, the fit with the HCS Scholars Program, and that they agree to allow the applicant to spend the proposed percent effort on the program’s activities and that they agree to allow the applicant to spend the proposed percent effort on the program’s activities.
8. Updated NIH Biosketch *(not included in page limits)*
9. Budget & Budget Justification *(not included in page limits)*
**Budget Considerations:**

A budget detailing research-related expenses and salary support with an accompanying budget justification is required. Support can include salary and travel (when possible) for the investigator and administrative support for the HCS to facilitate data access and other resources. The expected time commitment should be commensurate with the work proposed with a suggested range of 25% to 50% of an investigator’s effort for up to one year. Applicants should include costs for the investigator travel and accommodation to one 2.5 day in-person IMPACT Collaboratory Meeting and Scientific Conference in Bethesda, Maryland (assuming no restrictions on travel due to COVID-19) during the award period.

**Questions?**

For eligibility and program-related questions, please contact Rachel Hays, Project Manager, IMPACT HCS Core at Rachel.J.Hays@kp.org.