Children's National Medical Center receives first NIH CTSA given to a children's hospital

EurekAlert

WASHINGTON -- Children's National Medical Center, [1] in partnership with The George Washington University Medical Center, has received a prestigious Clinical and Translational Science Award (CTSA) from the National Center for Research Resources of the National Institutes of Health.

This award, which totals $20 million over five years, is the first CTSA given directly to a children's hospital. The Clinical and Translational Science Institute at Children's National [2] will now join the nationally renowned CTSA consortium, which is composed of institutions that work to transform the local, regional, and national environment to increase the efficiency and speed of clinical and translational research across the country.

Many other CTSA member institutions have research tracks that include pediatric research, but this collaboration will be the first, in the history of the award, to focus specifically on how scientific breakthroughs from the laboratory bench can be brought more quickly and efficiently to the bedsides of young patients locally and around the world. In addition, the institution's close proximity to the nation's capital will bring basic science into community engagement research and health policy applications, making these discoveries accessible for those most in need.

"Both Children's National and The George Washington University have long invested significant resources in investigating and understanding the health needs of the children and families of metropolitan Washington," said Jill Joseph, MD, PhD, [3] principal investigator of the CTSA and Director of the Clinical and Translational Science Institute at Children's National. "The families of our area, and across the country, have already benefited from what we've learned about better clinical treatments and improved community education for common diseases like asthma. We look forward to even greater breakthroughs in providing that care, now bolstered by new research collaborations with consortium institutions."

"Expanding our translational research and development activities, both within the different components at George Washington University and with Children's National Medical Center will provide new educational opportunities for young investigators and deliver cutting edge modalities for patients," said Peter Hotez. MD, PhD, co-principal investigator of the CTSA, GW Distinguished Research Professor, and President of the Sabin Vaccine Institute. "George Washington's expertise in translating research discoveries into biologics, coupled with the support of the CTSA, will further expand our commitment to developing new diagnostics and vaccines for the neglected infections of poverty that affect children right here in our nation's capital."

The Clinical and Translational Science Institute was created in 2008 as a partnership between Children's National Medical Center and The George Washington University. Its work focuses on three main areas:

- Diseases of childhood, such as cancer, birth defects, developmental disabilities, asthma;
- Childhood diseases that persist into adulthood, or adults living with childhood diseases long term—for example congenital heart disease, cystic fibrosis, and muscular dystrophy; and,
- Diseases of adulthood that begin in childhood and are worsened or develop with age, such as hypertension, type 2 diabetes, and obesity.

This NIH CTSA will help build the infrastructure to achieve the Institute's goals, which include:

- Designing effective, efficient, systems that encourage research collaboration across disciplines, track effectiveness, and report results;
- Addressing health disparities and promoting diverse collaborations among pediatric research teams;
- Promoting multi-disciplinary team science, and growing collaborations with community partners to tackle pressing pediatric health issues; and,
- Building better education and training for those interested in translational and collaborative approaches to pediatric research.

"We're grateful to the National Center for Research Resources for recognizing the importance of fostering research programs that are designed to address health issues on multiple levels at once, especially in pediatrics," said Mark Batshaw, MD, [4] Chief Academic Officer at Children's National. "As we've learned through our collaborative models in diseases like asthma, when it comes to pediatric health, particularly in urban health settings, the team science model is most successful at ensuring that families who need innovative treatments can access them sooner."

The national CTSA consortium aims to improve human health by transforming the research and training environment to enhance the efficiency and quality of clinical and translational research. The Clinical and Translational Science Institute at Children's National is one of only nine awards given this year.

SOURCE [5]

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