

The Louisiana Clinical and Translational Science (LA CaTS) Center involves 8 major academic, research and health care delivery institutions of Louisiana to provide a unified research infrastructure with an overall theme of “prevention, care and research of chronic diseases in the underserved population”.

The *LA CaTS Center* is built around four primary collaborating institutions in the state – Pennington Biomedical Research Center (Lead), LSU Health Sciences Center in New Orleans, Tulane Health Sciences Center, and LSU Health Care Services Division, but also with strong collaborations with our research partners which include the Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center in Shreveport, Xavier University of Louisiana, Research Institute for Children at Children’s Hospital and Louisiana State University A&M College.



The LA CaTS Center has adopted three important *Specific Aims*, listed below:

- **Aim 1: Create a collaborative infrastructure for clinical and translational research both within and across participating institutions.** We plan to achieve this by enhancing and sharing clinical research facilities and supporting all aspects of the research, education, and community engagement infrastructure required to establish and sustain a state-wide culture of integrated translational research. A major emphasis will be on providing infrastructure and direct support of investigator-initiated pilot and collaborative projects, particularly those investigators who are participants in our COBREs and INBREs
- **Aim 2: Increase the critical mass of investigators performing clinical and translational research.** This aim will be achieved by integration of existing faculty, coordinated recruitment of new faculty across institutions, and training of faculty and pre- and post doctoral trainees to expand their competence and comfort in clinical and translational team research and by involving clinic-based physicians in the communities we serve.
- **Aim 3: Improve and sustain bi-directional relationships with our communities.** Our approach includes assessing the needs of vulnerable populations, understanding those needs based on two-way communication, and promoting the appreciation for and involvement in Clinical Research among the population we serve.

To achieve these Specific Aims, the LA CaTS Center has developed the following Key Component Activities:

1. **Clinical and Translational Pilot Grants Program** supported by significant institutional resources and commitments from our NIH funded CoBRE & INBRE Programs to support pilot, collaborative and novel methodological research;
2. **Clinical Research Education, Mentoring and Career Development Core** to promote development of human capital (scientists, clinicians, and trained professional staff and leaders) necessary for continuation and growth of Louisiana’s clinical and translational research base;
3. **Clinical Research Design, Epidemiology & Biostatistics Core** aids clinical investigators and supports LA CaTS Center-sponsored research;
4. **Clinical Research Resources** provides for a unified infrastructure consisting of clinical research units in Baton Rouge, New Orleans and LSU Health Care Services Division clinical sites throughout the state. This component will support research activities at these facilities, will provide a center-wide Recruitment Core, and a network of clinical investigators, each employing a uniform and systematic approach to clinical research;
5. **Community Engagement & Outreach Resource** to support our clinical research efforts by establishing Community Advisory Boards in New Orleans and Baton Rouge, and providing training in community based participatory research and related topics;
6. **An Ethics and Regulatory Support Resource** across the collaborating institutions ensures the proper conduct of clinical research and addresses issues of harmonization and streamlining of administrative policies and procedures so as to enhance interdisciplinary collaboration;
7. **Biomedical Informatics Core** facilitates health outcomes research and clinical research recruitment using the electronic health record (EHR) in the LSU Hospitals and Clinics ;
8. **Health Literacy Core** to address the unique needs of our populations; and
9. **Communications Core** to facilitate communications between all LA CaTS Key Components, Administrative Core and committees.