Older Adult Research Specialists –
An innovation that is diversifying our research workforce and catalyzing new approaches to recruiting and retaining older adults and other underrepresented populations in clinical trials

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12-1 pm
Acknowledgement of Funding Support

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• The goal of this 3-year research infrastructure award is to enhance capacity at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus to recruit and retain older adults in clinical trials.

• Aims focus on diversifying the workforce through encore career opportunities for older adults from diverse backgrounds (Older Adult Research Specialists; Aim 1) and engaging populations of older adults through innovative outreach approaches (Research Roadshows; Aim 2).
Need and Opportunity: Increase inclusion of older adults in research

• Older adults are underrepresented in research, with dire consequences for healthcare quality and outcomes.

• In 2019, NIH instituted a new policy (NOT-OD-18-116) requiring the inclusion of individuals across the life span.

• That same year, only 25% ($n=498$) of adult clinical trials at CU Anschutz enrolled even one subject over age 50.
Need and Opportunity: Increase diversity of research workforce

- In March 2020, 60% of research staff were ≤44.
- 83% of staff self-identified as White, not Hispanic
- Older adults may be un- or under-employed and/or seeking encore careers
- Older adults will better understand lived experience, current realities of peers
Vision: Promote Health Equity

- Create meaningful roles for older adults
- Diversify the research workforce
- Improve health care and health outcomes for older adults
- Increase capacity to recruit, retain older adult peers in clinical trials (as study participants)
- Increase relevance of research findings for older adult populations

Improve health care and health outcomes for older adults
Project Overview

Aim 1 (Yrs 1-3): Train and promote the hiring of Older Adult Research Specialists to increase the recruitment and retention of peers in clinical trials

- Community outreach, engagement (recruitment)
- Facilitating informed consent (supports recruitment and better retention by reducing decisional conflict)
- Identifying barriers and connecting participants to needed resources (retention)
- Foundation: Health Navigation training
- Team-based projects address barriers to inclusion of older adults in research, catalyzing innovation and development of resources
OARS’ Unique Training and Preparation
Training Sequence (offered Fall, Spring; $n= 12-15$)

- **Orientation to Online Learning Tools**
  - Optional “Tech Office Hours” – 2hrs/wk throughout

- **Health Navigator Training**
  - (virtual, ~70 hrs, 7 wks)
  - Enhanced computer skills
  - Introduction to tools used to support virtual learning, job readiness
  - Health navigator credential
  - Qualify to be listed on state health department registry

- **Older Adult Research Specialist Training**
  - (virtual, ~70 hrs, 7 wks)
  - Older Adult Research Specialists uniquely prepared to support recruitment, retention of underrepresented populations in research
Computer Literacy Training

• Supports:
  • Access to virtual training programs,
  • Job readiness (PC-based) and
  • Ability to support study subjects with technical aspects of participation

• Established curriculum delivered by computer literacy instructor with 6 years of experience training older adults

• Office Hours (1 hr, 2x/wk):
  • 1st half: participants’ questions, emerging interests
  • 2nd half: didactic/demonstration
## Level 1, 2 Health Navigator Training Curriculum

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<tr>
<th>Level 1 – Community Impact Boot Camp →</th>
<th>Level 2 – Clinical or Research Focused</th>
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<td>(35 self-led and instructional hours)</td>
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### Building Blocks for Level 2 and Older Adult Research Specialist Roles:
- Mental Health First Aid
- Motivational Interviewing
- True Colors
- Diversity Equity Inclusion

| Module 1 Introduction to Health Navigation (includes Social Determinants of Health, Need for Navigators, Role and Scope of Health Navigation) |
| Module 2 (includes Healthcare Team Communications, Patient/Client Engagement) |
| Module 3 (includes Health Literacy and Cultural Competence) |
| Module 4 (Trauma Informed Care and Healthcare Law and Ethics) |
| Module 5 (Clients Needs and Barriers, Healthcare Coverage, Resources and Benefits, live practical practice) |
| Module 6: Introduction to Chronic Disease (self-led) |
Applying Health Navigation Training to OARS Roles

Respect, Meeting People Where They Are, Building Rapport
- Respecting person’s dignity, priorities, preferences, perspectives, situation, choice (No Judgement Zone)
- Demonstrating knowledge of person’s culture
- Focusing on person’s goals
- Communicating in responsive ways e.g., based on culture, health literacy
  
  Draws on MI, True Colors, DEI, Cultural Competency

Partnering to Identify Barriers and Solutions
- Facilitating and partnering; not directing or telling
- Listening non-judgmentally seeking understanding
- Asking open ended questions
- Maintaining good working knowledge of resources and/or where to go to find information
- Identifying and drawing on strengths and assets

Facilitating the Informed Consent Process
Techniques health navigators use to support and check for understanding:
- “Rowing with our OARS” (using open-ended questions, affirmations, reflections and summaries)
- Teach back (How might you explain [X] to someone else?)
- Promote transparency, trustworthiness, choice

Building Relationships while Maintaining Integrity to Professional Role
- Referring clinical issues/questions to principal investigator and/or clinical experts on team
- Maintaining working knowledge of organizational/institutional guidelines, policies and requirements
- Committing to professional excellence and ongoing learning and professional development

Trust
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<th>Section</th>
<th>Older Adult Research Specialist Training Topics (virtual Monday, Thurs 9am-12pm)</th>
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| **Exploring the Roles of Older Adult Research Specialists and Foundations** | Session 1: Role of Older Adult Research Specialists (compare and contrast with health navigators and community research liaisons)  
Session 2: Community Outreach, Engagement and Recruitment (CBPR Principles, cultural adaptations)  
Session 3: Overview of Clinical Trials (Types, Phases, Life Cycle, Clinical Trial Team)  
Session 4: Inclusion, Exclusion Criteria and the 5Ts and 5Ms -- Frameworks to Promote Inclusion of Older Adults in Research |
| **Evolution of human subjects research protections, current regulations, application through informed consent** | Session 5: Evolution of Human Subjects Research Protections and Current Regulations  
Session 6: Essential Elements of Informed Consent  
Session 7: Application - facilitating informed consent (Practicum I)  
Session 8: Panel discussion with clinical research study coordinators and facilitating informed consent (Practicum II) |
| **Team-based projects and preparing for job application process** | Session 9: Panel discussion with OARS + time for team-based projects  
Session 10: “Resume Refresh” Workshop + time for team-based projects  
Session 11: Mock Interviews + time for team-based projects  
Session 12: OPTIONAL – additional time for teams to work on projects  
Session 13: Virtual Job Fair |
| **Celebration!** | Graduation: presentation of projects, conferring of certificates of completion |
Diverse Teaching Team

Shannon Randall, BSN
David Kaye, JD
Katie Langland, MA
JR Kuo
Ron Blidar, M.Ed., CHES
Kathy Crusan-Ford, BA

Kathryn Nearing, PhD
Leslie Wright, MA
Lorenzo Ramírez
Gordon Duvall, DNP
May Tran
Cory Sedey-Seitz, MPH

Christy Williamson, CCRP, CHRC

Matt Isola
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<tr>
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<th>Adoption</th>
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| • Monthly Information Sessions (*n*=142); community meetings and engaged networks to recruit increasingly diverse cohorts  
  • Average age: 68 (54-82)  
  • African American *n*= 3; Hispanic *n*= 3; Asian *n*= 1  
  • Males *n*= 9  
  • Associates degree to PhD  
  • Neurodiversity | ✓ High satisfaction with training sessions: 4.7 average rating on a 5-point scale  
  ✓ Low attrition: 3 individuals who have started the training did not complete | 12 OARS Hires  
  • Geriatric Medicine *n*= 5  
  • Neurology *n*= 2  
  • Emergency Medicine *n*= 1  
  • ACCORDS *n*= 1  
  • COMIRB *n*= 1  
  • VA Eastern Colorado Healthcare System *n*= 2  
  *CCTSI, CON, 1 hired as a health navigator | ✓ Created comprehensive 14-week, 135-hour competency-based training curriculum delivered virtually; established diverse teaching team  
 ✓ Trained 3 cohorts  
 ✓ 11 team-based projects  
 ✓ 18 OARS graduates (14 OARS graduate: 5.24.23) | • OARS written into 5 grant applications (Geriatrics, Family Medicine, COSPH, School of Dental Medicine)  
 • OARS training program served as a model for PCORI application to develop research specialists among refugee women |
Older Adult Research Specialists

• Trained in recruiting and retaining older adult peers and other underrepresented populations in clinical research
• Include older adults connected to diverse communities
• Want to work on campus, willing to work flexible hours
• Pursuing these roles for these roles – passionate about research!
• Ready to hire! @oars.res | Linktree
New Recruitment and Retention Resources Created by OARS
OARS Consult Service

- Available 2\textsuperscript{nd} Friday monthly 9:30-10:45
- Return detailed notes re: actionable ideas within 2 weeks
- 2\textsuperscript{nd} consult available to review revised processes and materials
- Consult Request Form available @oars.res | Linktree

Figure: Evaluation feedback from first OARS consult
Should I Participate in a Clinical Trial?

A decision aid for older adults

This pamphlet contains factors to consider when deciding to participate in a clinical trial.

Key Questions

You can ask your provider for a copy of the informed consent form. The informed consent form is required to include potential risks and benefits of participating in the research clinical trial. You may want to discuss these additional questions:

☐ Have I discussed the risks and benefits with my primary care provider?
☐ Will participation affect the use of any of my medications?
☐ Do I need a consult with a pharmacist?
☐ Do I fully understand the research process?
☐ Do I understand my potential benefit or gain to participating?
☐ Are blood or tissue samples required?
☐ Do I fully understand the risks of participation?

☐ If the clinical trial is randomized, am I prepared to accept that I may be in the placebo group?
☐ Does participation exclude me from choosing other treatment options?
☐ Do I have physical limitations that cannot be accommodated?
☐ Do I know who to contact on the study team?
☐ Will I know the results of the study?

Other Factors To Consider

☐ Does this project align with my personal values?
☐ Who is funding the project? Do I have conflicts with the funder?
☐ Were patients like me involved in the design of the research project?
☐ Can I record the sessions, or bring someone with me to the visits?
☐ What personal data will I need to provide?
☐ Who else will potentially see my data?
☐ Am I comfortable with the confidentiality agreement in the consent form?
☐ What is my motivation for participating?
☐ Will I be compensated? What personal data is required to be compensated? Will I have to pay taxes on it? Is a W-9 required?

Travel and Timing

☐ How many trips will I need to make to the location?
☐ How long (months) is the study duration?
☐ What time of day are the visits?
☐ How long will each visit take?
☐ Is there adequate parking? Fees?
☐ Can I obtain a ride for each visit?
☐ Is there flexibility if my ride is delayed?

☐ If the research reveals I have a medical condition, do I have resources to obtain care?

Comprehension

☐ Do I want to ask someone to help me make the decision to participate?

Use this space for any thoughts or questions about participating.

Accessibility

☐ Are the accommodations adequate for easy access?
☐ Will I have assistance for mobility?
☐ Are there assistive hearing devices?
☐ Are there visual assists?

Hidden Costs

☐ Will I need to purchase food during the visit?
☐ Is a special diet required?

Insurance and Medical Costs

☐ Will participation affect my insurance?
☐ Are there costs not covered by insurance (e.g., in case of injury or extra visits to my clinic)?

Resources

Multidisciplinary center on Aging: https://medschool.career.lsu.edu/center-onaging
https://researchstudies.cancer.gov/
https://www.researchwatch.org/about/
http://www.nia.nih.gov/health/what-are-clinical-trials-and-studies
https://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/site/default/files/questio ns_full_list_v6_revised_12222016.pdf

This document was prepared by Older Adult Research Specialists (OARS), 2022.
TRANSLATIONAL SCIENCE IS IMPROVING THE PROCESS:

- Understanding what’s similar across diseases to help develop multiple treatments at a time.
- Developing models that better predict a person’s reaction to a treatment.
- Enhancing the design and conduct of clinical trials so the results more accurately reflect the patient population.

Learn more at: ncatst.nih.gov
Add a new type of Translational Science Researcher to your Team – hire an OARS!

Translational Science Researchers search for ways to break down barriers in the translation process [to] ultimately deliver more treatments to more patients more quickly. ([https://ncats.nih.gov/training-education/skills](https://ncats.nih.gov/training-education/skills)).

OARS can be a key resource to help recruit and retain more diverse study participants, thereby increasing the generalizability of research results for improved healthcare and health outcomes.
OARS and Age-Friendly University Priorities

Encore Career Opportunities

OARS catalyze innovative approaches and resources for recruiting and retaining older adults and other underrepresented populations in clinical research

Research Innovation

Older Adult Research Specialists may be embarking on 2nd careers, (re)entering the workforce

Intergenerational Learning

Older Adult Research Specialists educate researchers/research teams re: special considerations for engaging older adults and other underrepresented populations in research

CU Anschutz AFU Priorities
Having Trouble Recruiting and Retaining Older Adults and other Underrepresented Populations in Your Research?

We have new Resources for You!

• Hire an Older Adult Research Specialist (OARS)
  • Older adult peers from diverse backgrounds specifically trained to support recruitment, retention
  • Seeking part-time, full-time work on clinical trials
  • Willing to work flexible hours; desire to work on campus, as part of teams

• Free Consult Service staffed by OARS (available monthly)
  • Brainstorm new solutions to recruitment, retention challenges with those who share similar backgrounds as potential study participants

• Traveling Research Roadshows - Join us!
  • Opportunities to recruit engaged community members at locations across the state

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Acknowledgement of Partners

- Vice Chancellor of Research, **Dr. Tom Flaig**
- Vice Chancellor for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Community Engagement, **Dr. Regina Richards**
- Associate Vice Chancellor for Regulatory Compliance, **Dr. Alison Lakin**
- Colorado Clinical and Translational Sciences Institute, **Dr. Ronald Sokol**, PI
- The Cancer Center, **Dr. Christopher Lieu**, Chair, Clinical Cancer Research
- Division of Geriatric Medicine, **Dr. Cari Levy**, interim head
- Center for Inclusive Design and Engineering, **Dr. Cathy Bodine**, Executive Director
- Community Engagement Pillar, CCTSI: **Dr. Don Nease**, Director; **Montelle Taméz**, Deputy Director; **Community Research Liaisons**
THANK YOU