

## **ABSTRACT: 2018 ELAM Institutional Action Project**

**Project Title:** Redesigning the Research Enterprise Structure at The MetroHealth System, a major affiliate of Case Western Reserve University.

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**Collaborators and Mentors:** Bernard Boulanger MD

**Topic Category (choose 1):** Research

**Background, Significance of project:** The MetroHealth System is a major affiliate of Case Western Reserve University. Research has historically been an integrated part of MetroHealth's mission as illustrated by a wide research portfolio including basic, translational, clinical and population health research programs. MetroHealth transitioned from a departmental-based structure to a clinical service line structure about 5 years ago. As a result, research administration was centralized to a Research Institute. However, the research institute has had challenges in growing the research enterprise. Given the hospitals continued commitment to invest in research, and the recent launch of a Research Strategic Planning process, it was felt timely to develop and implement an improved research structure to maximize the hospital's Return on Investment (ROI) and to facilitate execution of the new research strategic plan.

**Purpose/Objectives:** The main purpose of this project is to restructure the research enterprise to maximize the ROI for research, facilitate execution of the new research strategic plan and reach sustainability.

**Methods/Approach/Evaluation Strategy:** The first step was to perform a financial analysis of the different research programs by the type of research (basic/translational, clinical or population health) and then also by research centers. Major stakeholders were interviewed to identify the limitations of the research enterprise. An analysis was then performed to determine where are the strengths, gaps and opportunities for improvement.

**Outcomes/Results:** The financial analysis and interviews all highlighted a lack of financial accountability due to the current structure. This could be resolved by creating departments within the research institute that will be fiscally independent and responsible for their budget. The proposed structure would include three departments: Translational, Clinical and Population Health Research. The financial analysis demonstrated that the major research revenues come from translational research (62% of the revenues with 70% of the overhead contribution), whereas clinical research brings in 23% of the research revenues and population health 15% with overhead contribution for each being 20% and 10% respectively. Our analysis illustrated that translational research covers 88% of its costs while clinical and population health research cover 83% and 70% respectively. Several areas to improve cost and resource accountability were identified. One of the major issue recognized was with the industry-sponsored clinical trials where an average shortfall of 55% from the contracted award was reported. Therefore, most of the tactics employed to improve the research finances will be focused on closing this gap in the industry-sponsored clinical trials.

**Discussion/Conclusion with Statement of Impact/Potential Impact:** We anticipate that the proposed research institute structure will improve the fiscal accountability and financial performance of the research enterprise, as well as, ensure the successful launch of the new research strategic plan. The MetroHealth System believes that its research mission is vital to its vision of being the most admired public health system in the nation.