Establishing a Center for Health Services Research in Geriatrics
Institutional Action Project, Presented at ELAM® Leaders Forum, Class of 2021-2022

Teryl Nuckols, MD, MSHS; Assoc Prof, Cedars-Sinai; Prof in Residence, UCLA; Director, Div of General Internal Medicine; Vice Chair for Clinical Research, Dept of Medicine, Cedars-Sinai
Collaborators: Paul Noble, MD; Nancy Sicotte, MD; Sonja Rosen, MD

Conclusions
An experienced geriatrics researcher will:
- Expand rigorous research
- Strengthen systems of care
- Enhance medical education

Background

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of People Age 65 or Older, by Age Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Millions of People</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65-74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Congressional Budget Office

Goal
- To establish, within the Division of General Internal Medicine, a Center for Health Services Research in Geriatrics that will collaborate and synergize with existing activities in research, education, and clinical care across Cedars-Sinai.

Approach
- We identified the steps involved in developing the Center and iteratively refined the concept and goals with information and input from local and national sources.

Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step in Project</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Lessons Learned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gather Information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research in aging at Cedars-Sinai currently</td>
<td>Complete</td>
<td>$15M NIH funding for research related to aging including several basic science labs, a few junior health services researchers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National priorities for research and funding</td>
<td>Complete</td>
<td>Emphasizes strategies for improving care delivery and pragmatic research. NIA: generous paylines for dementia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research programs in geriatrics at top institutions</td>
<td>Complete</td>
<td>Vary in size, several house geriatics and palliative care together, some top programs have multiple research Centers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship between geriatrics &amp; palliative care</td>
<td>Complete</td>
<td>These related specialties both employ interprofessional teams to care for patients with complex illness, with an emphasis on function and quality of life. National leaders in both fields have prioritized research on strategies for improving care delivery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approach to establishing research center</td>
<td>Complete</td>
<td>Process is remarkably similar across sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIH-funded research in geriatrics</td>
<td>Complete</td>
<td>Good number of funded researchers, some at top centers and others scattered; fewer may be at a career stage suitable for this role</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Engage Stakeholders
- Leaders Complete Dept of Medicine Division Directors, Dean's Research Advisory Committee, hospital CMD
- Potential partners Complete Dementia Care Program/Neurology, Geriatric Emergency Dept, Palliative Medicine program with fellowship (clinical), Nursing, Orthopaedics, Computational Biomedicine, Psychiatry

Assess / Assure Feasibility
- Assess SWOT Complete Cedars-Sinai provides exceptional care to a very large and diverse population of older adults. Biggest challenge may be cost of living in LA.
- Develop financial plan Complete Cost of Center $4.2M/5 yrs, estimated research revenue of $1.2M/5 yrs
- Philanthropic support Ongoing Many donors in geriatric population but will take time to cultivate donors.
- Obtain approval Ongoing Chair of Department of Medicine gave preliminary approval

Prepare to Act
- Consider structure Ongoing Director and two faculty. Potential for alignment with Palliative Medicine.
- Narrow goals Mostly complete Greatest synergies for pragmatic health services research; would consider epi, basic science, NIH/equivalent funding; highly collaborative; national reputation
- Develop recruitment strategy Ongoing

Context at Cedars-Sinai
- Terrific opportunities for pragmatic research on healthcare delivery for older adults.
- Hybrid major academic center / large community health system
- Ranked #6 overall by U.S. News, #10 in Geriatrics
- Largest population age >60 of any academic medical center
- New Dementia Care Program (Sicotte, Neurology Chair/ELUM)
- Growing research, ranked #10 among non-University hospitals
- Health Services Research Core, Master’s program
- Culture reflects a true learning healthcare system
- New Dept of Computational Biomedicine, Geriatric ED
- Department of Biomedical Sciences with PhD Programs
- NO experienced, funded researchers in geriatrics

Section of Geriatrics
- Est. in 2017 in the Division of General Internal Medicine, in partnership with Cedars-Sinai Medical Delivery Network
- Section leads large QI initiatives, teaches residents, conducts research

Milestones/Next Steps
- 2022 Request
- 2023 Recruit
- 2024 Develop
- 2026 Win Funding
- 2027 Expand
Project Title: Establishing the Cedars-Sinai Center for Health Services Research in Geriatrics

Name and Institution:
Teryl Nuckols, MD, MSHS
Associate Professor of Medicine, Cedars-Sinai
Professor-in-Residence, David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA
Director, Division of General Internal Medicine and
Vice Chair for Clinical Research, Department of Medicine at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center

Collaborators and Mentors: Paul Noble, MD; Nancy Sicotte, MD; Sonja Rosen, MD

Topic Category: Research

Background/Significance:
- The population age >65 years is growing rapidly. Many older adults with multiple chronic conditions, dementia, frailty, and/or functional impairment have difficulty navigating the healthcare system.
- National leaders in geriatrics have prioritized health services research to improve care delivery.
- Cedars-Sinai has many activities and assets related to health services research in older populations, including a major regional hybrid academic/community-based healthcare system, outstanding systems of care leading to a national ranking of #10 in Geriatrics, large and diverse populations of older adults, a new Dementia Care Program in Neurology, a health services research core, and a master’s program in health delivery science, among others.
- Within General Internal Medicine (GIM), the Division Director (Nuckols) established a Section of Geriatrics in 2017, in partnership with Dr. Rosen (Section Chief) and the Cedars-Sinai Medical Delivery Network. GIM also houses a Palliative Medicine program and fellowship.
- Several current health services researchers in GIM have shifted their focus toward older adults and secured grant funding for research in aging populations.
- Despite these activities and assets, Cedars-Sinai has no experienced, extramurally funded researchers in geriatrics.

Purpose/Goal/Objectives: To establish, within the Division of GIM, a Center for health services research in geriatrics that will synergize with existing research, education, and clinical care activities within the Division and across Cedars-Sinai.

Methods/Approach: We identified the steps involved in developing the Center and iteratively refined the concept and goals of the Center with information and input from local and national sources.

Outcomes/Results to Date: Through the steps below, we learned many lessons and secured preliminary approval to establish the Center.
1. Developed preliminary goals
2. Gathered information on:
   a. Research related to aging at Cedars-Sinai
b. Priorities for research and funding recommended by national bodies
c. Research programs in geriatrics nationally
d. Procedures for establishing a research center
e. Potential research, clinical, and administrative partners at Cedars-Sinai
f. NIH-funded research projects in geriatrics around the U.S.

(3) Engaged stakeholders at Cedars-Sinai
(4) Assessed Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats
(5) Considered structure of Center
(6) Developed a financial plan
(7) Initiated a search for philanthropy
(8) Narrowed goals and developed selection criteria for Director

**Evaluation Strategy:** There are six long-term SMART goals:
2022: Nuckols (ELAM Fellow) secures final approval for Center
2023: Nuckols oversees recruitment of Director
2024: Director establishes collaborations across Cedars-Sinai
2026: Director secures new extramural research funding and hires additional researchers
2027: Center's research funding justifies expansion

**Discussion/Interpretation:**
Remaining steps include refining the recruitment strategy and searching for promising candidates for Center Director. We believe that an experienced, NIH-funded health services researcher in geriatrics would find Cedars-Sinai to be a terrific environment for conducting pragmatic research on healthcare delivery.

**Summary/Conclusion:** The proposed Center would strengthen health services research (by bringing specific expertise, mentoring junior researchers, and collaborating with other departments), education (by offering residents, clinical fellows, research fellows, and masters students more opportunities in research), and systems of care (by partnering with operational leaders to add depth and rigor to QI initiatives for older populations).