



2018 Strategic Planning Activities: Annual Summary and Report

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Justification Statement

The central leadership of the Georgia Clinical and Translational Science Alliance (Georgia CTSA), along with the Evaluation & Continuous Improvement (ECI) program, identified the need for annual discussion and reporting on the status of each program to consistently track and assess the aims and milestones of the programmatic infrastructure that supports clinical and translational research in Georgia. This is necessary to determine when programs need to adjust their plans and milestones in support of their individual specific aims and the overarching aims of the alliance. To serve this goal, the ECI team conducts annual Strategic Planning Activities used to characterize Program activities, inform development and monitoring of processes and milestones, and initiate mid-course amendments. Annual Strategic Planning Reports also provide summary evidence of effectiveness and impact in reaching each Program’s specific aims and objectives year to year.

The Strategic Planning process consists of program directors meeting individually with ECI. ECI collects information on key objectives to evaluate indicators and monitor progress toward accomplishing milestones over the course of a program year. The timeline for the process is predetermined by ECI and communicated to each program to document the program progress and provide feedback. This includes completing written strategic planning worksheets and conducting interviews with program directors and team members to discuss the objectives detailed in these documents as well as methods for measuring outcomes. Results of the milestones, achievements, and overall impact are included in the annual report to the External Advisory Committee at the end of each year. These efforts will contribute to more efficient progress toward the aims and goals of all program groups, aiding in the aggregate impact of the overarching alliance each year.

Acronym/Abbreviations List

BERD	Biostatistics, Epidemiology & Research Design
CE	Community Engagement
CMDS	Collaboration & Multi-Disciplinary Team Science
ECI	Evaluation & Continuous Improvement
OGCC	Organization, Governance, Collaboration & Communication
GCRCs	Georgia CTSA Clinical Research Centers
ICa	Innovation Catalyst
Infor	Informatics
ISP	Integrating Special Populations
Peds	Pediatrics
Pilots	Pilot Translational and Clinical Studies
QE/LTICs	Quality & Efficiency/Liaison to Trial Innovation Centers
RC	Recruitment Center
Res Ed	Research Education
RKS	Regulatory Knowledge & Support
TWD	Translational Workforce Development

Overall Summative Evaluation of 2018 Strategic Planning Activities

Strategic planning activities for 2018 focused on breaking down silos and barriers to working as a collaborative, unified alliance. An overarching goal for the year was to emphasize cohesion, communication, and working as a team, as well as planning for sustainable, far-reaching impact. The following summative evaluation describes the process and findings of the 2018 strategic planning, providing a bird's eye view of the current structure, accomplishments, and strategic plans of the Georgia CTSA.

Steps and Timeline

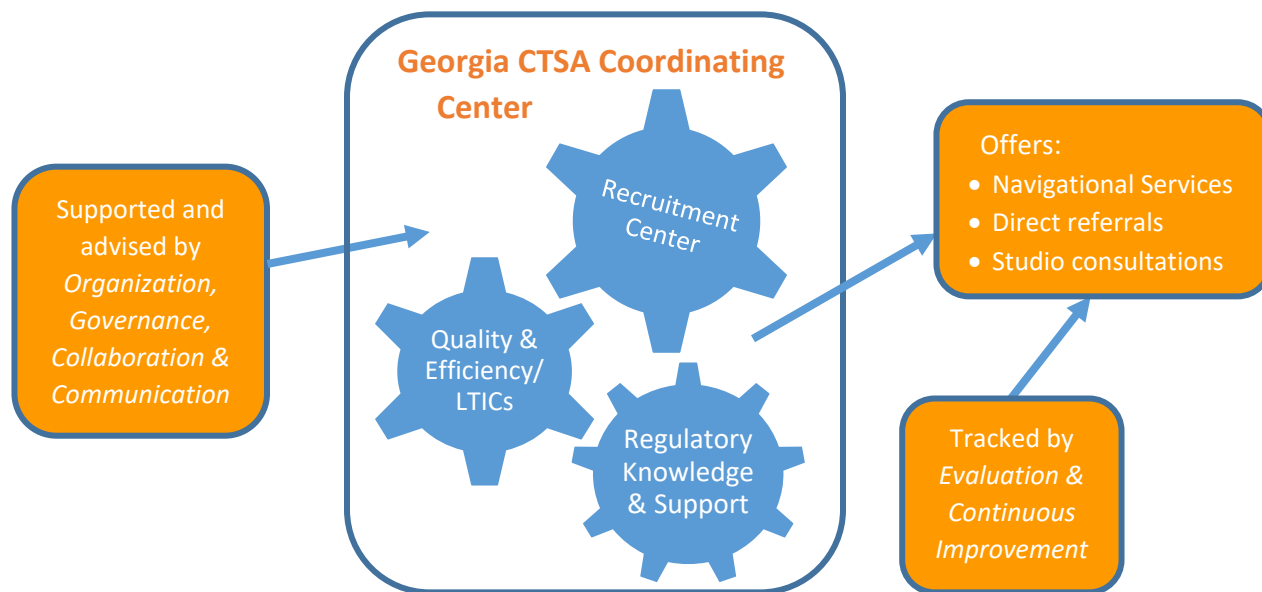
The Strategic Planning process was initiated in July 2018. ECI gathered updated strategic planning worksheets from each program and conducted meetings with program leadership, ECI, and OGCC. Each program detailed current objectives and activities serving each of their specific aims, and answered questions regarding this year's strategic planning theme of 'Breaking down silos', including top accomplishments, how programs communicated with other institutions/programs and operated as a team, and how programs extended their scope beyond Atlanta. OGCC members attended meetings in order to discuss updates to communication plans and issues related to overall organizational governance. ECI drafted one-page reports summarizing the findings of the worksheets and meetings including: (1) an elevator summary of aims and services; (2) progress against milestones over the past year; and (3) goals for the next year. Reports were submitted to each program for edits and approval and included in this report once finalized.

Grant Year 1: What have we achieved?

As part of this year's strategic planning process, programs were asked to identify their **top 3 accomplishments** over the past year. In many cases, these involved launching new initiatives, continuing successful ongoing activities, or expanding their scope of work, such as integrating UGA into program operations. Stand out accomplishments across the alliance included a number of **high profile events** (e.g. Inaugural Georgia CTSA State-wide Conference, CE's Grant Writing Academy, BERD's Annual Research Forum), **innovative products** (CMDTS's ROCS inventory, ECI's bibliometric publication, TWD's Competency-based Career Navigation System), **new information** gathered (CE, ISP & RC's surveys of statewide rural health networks), and **extensions of services** (RKS's UGA Institute for International Biomedical Regulatory Sciences). Key accomplishments for each program are incorporated into their respective individual summary reports.

One significant accomplishment that overarched several programs was the establishment, staffing, and launching of the new **Georgia CTSA Coordinating Center**. The new center is operated jointly by the RKS, QE, LTICs, and RC programs, with the support and advisement of OGCC and with tracking and evaluative support from ECI (see **Figure 1**). The coordinating center was created to meet the need of the growing alliance for a more efficient and centralized front door for customers seeking Georgia CTSA support, including navigation of available services, direct referrals to programs for support, and customized studio consultations. The goal is to combine the knowledge and expertise of the cooperating programs to reduce barriers to accessing services and increase the efficiency with which support is delivered.

Figure 1. Cooperative Organizational Structure of the new Georgia CTSA Coordinating Center



Breaking Down Silos: Working cohesively across a unified alliance

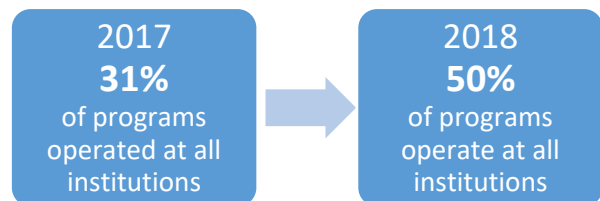
Teamwork and Communication across Institutions

In Grant Year 1, from fall 2017 through summer 2018, the Georgia CTSA has placed particular emphasis on operating as a unified team that leverages the complementary and unique strengths and resources of four distinct institutions. In order to create an alliance that makes more of these institutions than the sum of their parts, program leaders have worked deliberately to cultivate ties with representatives at each relevant institution, including integrating our newest partner, UGA. **Table 1 summarizes current staff representation** at the four partner institutions for all programs in the alliance. Representation is defined as having at least one staff member with a defined position and percent effort, indicating that the program has some formal operation and a financial stake at that institution. This may include managerial or administrative staff, directors, co-directors, or steering board members.

Although programs do not necessarily have staff at all institutions, there has been a sincere effort to create new or strengthen existing connections across institutions such that programs have team members with complementary strengths situated at the institutions that are relevant to their operations. Between 2017 and 2018 this effort has been

Table 1. Staff representation at each partner institution

	Emory	MSM	GA Tech	UGA
OGCC	Y	Y	Y	Y
CMDTS	Y	Y	Y	Y
Res Ed	Y	Y	Y	Y
Pilots	Y	Y	Y	Y
ICa	Y	Y	Y	Y
RKS	Y	Y	Y	Y
BERD	Y	Y	Y	Y
CE	Y	Y	Y	Y
ECI	Y	Y		Y
RC	Y	Y		Y
ISP	Y	Y		Y
QE/LTICs	Y	Y		Y
GCRCs	Y	Y		Y
Infor	Y	Y	Y	
Peds	Y	Y		
TWD	Y			Y



evidenced by an increase in staff representation from 31% of programs having personnel at all 4 institutions, to now 50% of programs having personnel at all institutions. All remaining programs have staff collaborating across at least 2 of the institutions. Programs that focus directly on clinical trials (e.g. GCRCs, RC, ISP) operate at Emory, MSM, and



In February 2018, the inaugural UGA KL2 scholar leveraged the partnership by using Emory's GCRCs to conduct a study requiring a metabolic kitchen and specialized nutrition assessment services not available at UGA

UGA. Georgia Tech does not have a clinical trials unit but investigators utilize the relevant programs (e.g. GCRCs, RC, LTICs, ISP) to conduct clinical trials focused on innovative health technologies. Of note, there has been successful integration of UGA personnel into all programs except Informatics and Pediatrics, as UGA/Athens does not have a centrally tracked hospital/health data system or pediatric research hospital. However, UGA faculty members working in these areas do have access to resources, expertise and specialized services available at other institutions through the Georgia CTSA partnership. Further, formal staff representation is only one criterion for defining collaboration across

institutions. All Georgia CTSA programs offer their services to investigators at all four partner institutions. In addition, some programs communicate and collaborate across institutions in less formal ways; for instance, the Pediatrics program has provided consultations on adolescent research for UGA GCRCs staff, and the ECI director serves on the dissertation committee of a Georgia Tech student examining the impact of the CTSA program. Moreover, data from GeorgiaCTSA.org has shown that UGA has gone from an infrequent to the 2nd most frequent institutional affiliation for website visitors. Finally, cross-institutional collaboration also occurs regularly with other institutions affiliated with the Georgia CTSA. For example, many programs have staff with joint appointments and operations at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, Grady Hospital, and the Atlanta VA hospital.

Teamwork and Communication across Programs

In addition to cross-institutional communication and collaboration, the Georgia CTSA has emphasized cross-program collaboration as a means of drawing together diverse skills and interests toward the common mission of the alliance. During the strategic planning process, ECI catalogued instances of cross-program collaborations that serve to enhance the impact of support offerings by creating synergy amongst programs. Ties are defined as explicitly shared activities that produce a shared product or achievement, claimed by and serving the aims of both programs. For example, in the past year the Pilots program began leveraging their skills and knowledge in pre- and post-award processes for others by administering grants for the BERD, Informatics, and CE programs. In addition, the BERD program provided expert assistance to MSCR students in the Res Ed Program, enhancing design and analyses in their master's thesis.

Figure 2 depicts **collaborative ties among programs** from 2017 to 2018. The 2018 network revealed that, on average, **programs worked with approximately 9 other programs**, with considerable variability. Programs such as OGCC and ECI touch all programs through their overarching role in the administrative home, and programs like Informatics are also broadly-reaching through infrastructural-type offerings such as data platforms and technology. Conversely, there are programs that have very focused, specific activities that function fairly independently. TWD, for example, focuses very

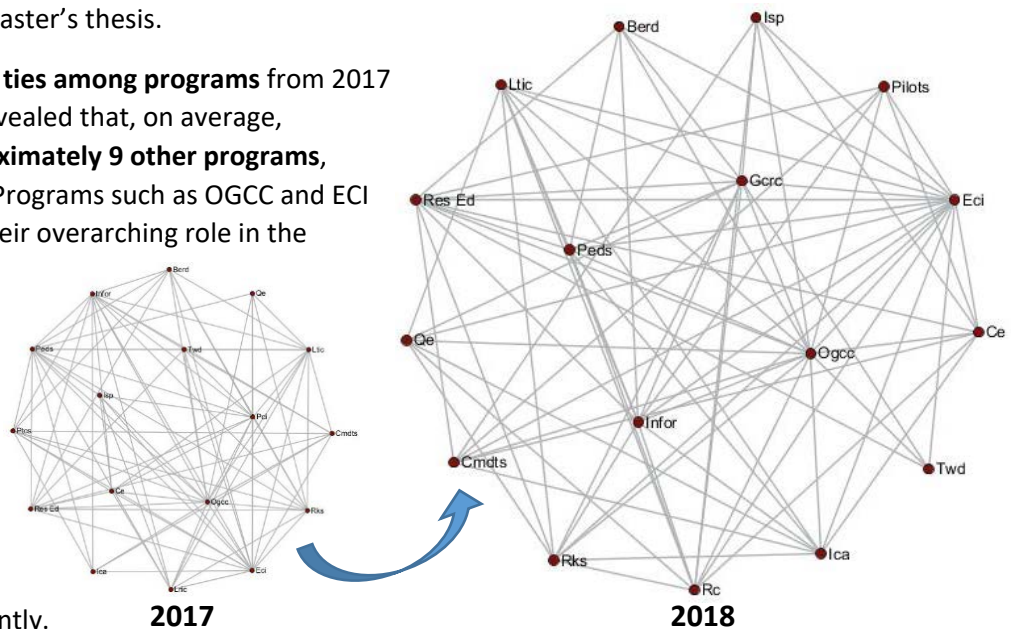


Figure 2. Collaboration Networks among all Programs

autonomously on developing their workforce development application.



In March 2018, Innovation Catalyst and OGCC collaborated with the Pediatrics program to sponsor a booth at the Atlanta Science Festival for the KIDS Advisory Board. At least 1,000 people visited the booth to learn about coding and a new radio frequency identification bracelet invention

Relative to 2017, the network of cross-program collaborations has become modestly *less* connected. In 2017, the network density was 65%, indicating that 65% of all possible cross-program ties (88 out of 136) were represented; **in 2018, the network density is 57%** (78 out of 136 possible ties). Although some new connections were made, there was an overall net decline in collaborations. At the outset of Grant Year 1, several programs expressed intentions to work with other groups on certain objectives, but since then, plans and goals for some of these programs have become more sharply focused and defined. Some of the aforementioned activities

may still be in planning stages but not yet executed, possibly due to momentum lost during the significant funding gap in 2017 (e.g. integration across ISP and Peds on rural pediatric health efforts is still in process), and some programs may have opted against pursuing some planned activities (e.g. TWD reduced its anticipated collaborations with other groups as their goals were refined). Overall, this shift underscores the clarity of focus that has been achieved over the past year with regard to strategic plans. These changes may also indicate increased efficiency in cases where programs opted to discontinue activities that other programs could execute independently. The door now remains open for new cross-program collaboration opportunities in Grant Year 2.

Finally, in addition to collaboration among Georgia CTSA programs, many programs cooperate extensively with external entities. Some of these entities reach across the state, including the Georgia Kids and Families Impacting Disease Through Science Advisory Board, GA Tech's Technological Innovation: Generating Economic Results (TI:GER) program, and Atlanta's Women in Technology organization. Some are national projects in which the Georgia CTSA is participating, such as the All of Us Research Program and the 10,000 Women Initiative.

Beyond Atlanta: Statewide, regional & national scope

The most significant change to the Georgia CTSA in the first year of this grant was the addition of UGA as a new partner institution outside of metro Atlanta. With this change came an increased emphasis on operations and impact beyond the capital. Many existing programs have made conscious efforts to reach beyond their previous scope, while new programs commenced their operations with an eye toward impact across Georgia and beyond. Programs have worked toward achieving this goal by incorporating new partners (including new programs) and new services that address issues of statewide concern.



In the 2nd quarter of 2018, CE further strengthened statewide partnerships by using existing UGA connections to add representatives from the Georgia Department of Community Health and State Office of Rural Health in Cordele, GA to their community steering board

A notable way in which the Georgia CTSA has expanded its reach in its first year was the founding of the **new Annual Georgia CTSA Statewide Conference**, a collaborative and



inclusive venture involving all programs and all institutions in the alliance, as well as being open to participants throughout Georgia. This successful, two-day event made a clear contribution to clinical and translational science in Georgia by creating a forum for the exchange of ideas and opportunities to create and strengthen professional networks.

Figure 3. Conceptual model of the synergistic, multi-program effort to address statewide health concerns by recruiting rural populations into clinical trials



The conference hosted over **280 attendees from at least 20 institutions and organizations across Georgia**, and was given a rating of **4.1 stars** (out of 5) by post-event survey respondents. In Grant Year 2, the conference will be spearheaded and improved upon by the CMDTS program, and will include Michael Kurilla from NCATS as the keynote speaker. In the future, CMDTS has plans to expand the conference to include other CTSA hubs outside the state of Georgia.

Another important example of a **synergistic effort toward statewide outreach and impact** is depicted in **Figure 3**. This multi-program, cooperative strategy leverages the unique expertise and functions of at least six programs (GRCs, Peds, RKS, RC, ISP, & CE) to develop statewide outreach networks that will serve to recruit rural Georgians into clinical trials. This effort is intended to directly address and impact health concerns outside of the Atlanta area. So far, RC, ISP and CE have forged new

professional connections and collected survey data from more than 200 participants throughout Georgia. These programs will be pooling the information gathered to aid RC and RKS in examining ethical recruitment strategies for integrating rural participants into studies taking place in both the GRCs and Pediatric Research Center. The central anchor of the Georgia CTSA will serve to streamline this ambitious objective, minimizing duplication of efforts, enhancing communication across groups, and ultimately increasing the speed and efficiency of attaining this translational goal.

Further to cultivating a statewide scope, many Georgia CTSA programs engage in activities with regional and even national scope. Several **cross-hub collaborations** have been undertaken this year, including a number of co-authored manuscripts and grant applications, sharing of tools and applications developed here, presentations at national meetings, and inter-state consultations and communications. These activities ensure that the reach of the Georgia CTSA does not stop at the state border and that opportunities for productive collaborations are embraced whenever possible.



Grant Year 2: What is on the horizon?

In the coming year, the leadership of the Georgia CTSA will utilize this document, along with the External Advisory Committee report, to inform priorities for the December leadership retreat. Along with continuing emphasis on cohesive teamwork and statewide presence, new developing initiatives, including the All of Us and 10,000 Women projects, and the new online education supplement will take on increased prominence in Grant Year 2. At this stage, the alliance is well-positioned to look forward to sustainable productivity with an ongoing strategic planning process that will allow programs to responsively refine their objectives and activities to optimally serve their specific aims and overarching goals of the alliance.

Individual Program Summary Report *(ECI Example)*

The following reports condense the main findings of each individual strategic planning meetings in terms of:

- (1) an elevator speech summary of aims and services
- (2) explanation of progress against milestones over the past year
- (3) description of goals for the next year



Program:	Evaluation & Continuous Improvement (ECI)	Institutional representation: ✓ Emory ✓ MSM ✓ UGA Cross-program collaborations: ✓ OGCC ✓ GCRCs ✓ RC ✓ BERD ✓ ISP ✓ CMDTS ✓ ICa ✓ RKS ✓ Peds ✓ Pilots ✓ TWD ✓ Infor ✓ QE/LTICs ✓ CE ✓ Res Ed
Meeting Date:	07/30/2018	
Attendees:	Eric Nehl, Nikki Llewellyn, Marie Manguerra, Andrew West (Emory)	
<u>Elevator Summary</u> of aims:	As part of the administrative core, ECI serves the programs and central leadership of the Georgia CTSA, and collaborates externally with the national CTSA program. We... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Track, report on, and assess the impact of the Georgia CTSA's activities ➤ Provide strategic planning and program evaluation support to foster the continuous improvement of the programs and the hub ➤ Conduct innovative evaluation research projects for dissemination 	
<u>Progress</u> against milestones in the past year:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supported transition by conducting strategic planning, rolling out tracking system (RAPID) upgrade with changes for ACTSI → Georgia CTSA, and completing APR/RPPR final close-out for ACTSI • Aided intra-alliance and external communication by disseminating 7 new/updated web-ready infographics, 4 posters/1 presentation at ACTS conference, publishing K-Club and Publication Content Evaluations to Georgia CTSA website, and holding evaluation training for community members • Contributed to 4 grant applications in support of Georgia CTSA programs and partners • Collaborated across Georgia CTSA institutions and across national CTSA hubs by submitted 1 manuscript for publication (with authors from 3 different CTSA hubs), with 2 more in progress, and chairing national CTSA evaluators workgroup on bibliometrics 	
<u>Goals</u> for the next year:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to develop manuscripts using innovative methods with both internal data sources, as well as collaborations with evaluators across the CTSA hubs (e.g. patent data, bibliometric inter-disciplinarity & pilot ROI) 2. Work with Informatics program and LITS to transition from RAPID to an improved system (e.g. RedCap), ensure all programs are tracking activities, and create metric dashboards to showcase productivity, progress and achievements 3. Develop innovative ways to measure/track and understand best practices for successful collaboration across the alliance 4. Create bios with skills profiles for the ECI team to add to website. Identify a collaborator at Georgia Tech with additional skills to incorporate 	<i>Initials & Date of Approval:</i> EN 8/27/18