

Strategy for Network-Wide Academic Partnerships

Rationale for Creating Network-Wide Academic Partnerships

The Integrated Health Network (IHN) and its member organizations are committed to promoting affordable, accessible, quality healthcare in the region through comprehensive patient-centered collaboration. Opportunities for partnership between IHN community health centers and academic institutions are increasing as funding opportunities require demonstrated collaboration with existing networks of community partners. These partnerships have the potential to encourage an evidence-based, regional approach to local health care delivery.

Criteria

Proposals requesting IHN (network-wide) collaboration, participation, support and/or approval must:

- Share the purpose of the IHN mission and programming;
- Have a strong potential for measurable and sustainable benefits to:
 - The patients of the St. Louis safety network, and/or
 - The structure and function of the St. Louis safety network;
- Not place undue burden on patients or community health centers;
- Include financial support to the IHN, if IHN management, staffing time, or other resources are being requested to support and/or sustain the partnership;
- Include financial support to community health centers including staffing or other resources that are required to support and/or sustain the partnership; and
- Maintain ongoing and open communication including sharing the end results of the project with health center and patient participants.

Process

The term “network-wide” refers to collaboration with four (4) or more IHN member organizations (see [FAQ](#) for IHN member organizations). The IHN will consider opportunities to collaborate with academic partners on projects that reflect the mission and programming of the network. Projects with a direct positive impact on patients in the St. Louis safety net will be given priority.

Initial Communication: The IHN will require a Written Request for Partnership (WRP) that includes:

- Description of the proposed project
- Detailed description of the role of IHN
- Proposed budget range

See *WRP Form*.

Clinical Review Committee: This committee is convened as needed to review worthy academic partnership proposals. Reviewed proposals may be developed for submission upon the approval of the IHN Board of Directors.

Dr. Michael O’Connor, BJK People’s Health Centers
 Dr. Jade James, St. Louis County Department of Health
 Dr. Johnetta Craig and Kathy Garst, Family Care Health Centers
 Dr. Melisa Tepe, Grace Hill Health Centers
 Veronica Richardson, Grace Hill Health Centers
 Dr. Leslie McCray-Etuk, Myrtle Hilliard Davis Comprehensive Health Centers
 Dr. Fred Rottnek, Saint Louis University
 Susan Wilson, Missouri Primary Care Association

Board Review: IHN Board will approve or decline moving forward with the academic partnership.

Timing: Engagement with any community partners should begin well before any proposal is submitted in order to maximally align priorities with community needs, increase potential sustainability and capacity for sustained impact, and foster trust between partners. When submitting proposals for which you would like IHN collaboration, participation, support and/or approval it is important to allow ample time. Investigators are encouraged to allow for a minimum of one (1) month of academic-community partner collaboration engagement between the WRP approval notification and the funding submission due date (or letter of intent due date if one is required and contingent for full proposal submission). The IHN will provide notification following WRP review as soon as possible (e.g. about 2 weeks). At the discretion of the IHN, the Clinical Review Committee may request a status update and to read final versions (or close to final versions) of the grant text before the grant application is submitted. The Committee will expect to be sent the final version of the grant application once submitted. Special funding announcements with short timeframes between announcement and submission will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

