

NORTHWESTERN LEADS CONSORTIUM TO INTEGRATE PATIENT-REPORTED OUTCOMES INTO ELECTRONIC HEALTH RECORDS

\$6.3 Million NIH Grant Awarded to Nine Universities

- Project will make it easier for researchers and clinicians to collect information about patient-reported outcomes and use it to improve clinical care and research
- Outcomes surveys ask patients about their physical, mental and social health
- “This represents the future of patient care and research”

CHICAGO --- A \$6.3 million grant to accelerate the use of patient reported outcomes in research and clinical care has been awarded by the National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS) of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to a coalition of nine universities, led by Northwestern University.

“We are very excited to see this multi-institutional project take off,” said Dr. Donald Lloyd-Jones, director of the Northwestern University Clinical and Translational Sciences (NUCATS) Institute. “This approach to direct, efficient acquisition and integration of patient-reported information represents the future of patient care and medical research, and this project paves the way to that future.”

The project, EHR Access to Seamless Integration of PROMIS (EASI-PRO), will make it easier for researchers and clinicians to collect patient reported outcomes information and use it to improve clinical care and research. This is because the Patient Reported Outcomes Measurement Information System (PROMIS), a computerized survey tool that adapts to each patient’s unique answers, will be integrated into the patient’s Electronic Health Record (EHR) along with their medical information. By only asking the most relevant questions, PROMIS has the potential to make the surveys up to 10 times shorter, so it is less of a burden on those taking it.

Patient-reported outcomes surveys ask patients questions about their physical, mental and social health. By comparing an individual’s medical information and their survey responses, health care providers and researchers can see how clinical care is impacting the health of patients. Studies have shown that patient-reported outcomes surveys are one of the best ways to improve health care quality and increase the impact of research.

PROMIS has already been integrated into the Northwestern Medicine EHR and now the EASI-PRO team is building software that will integrate PROMIS with a large number of EHRs including Cerner and Epic, two of the largest vendors. This means that health care systems across the country will be able to administer the same surveys and easily compare results.

“Our experience integrating the PROMIS tools into the EHR at Northwestern has convinced us that tight workflow integration of PROs into the clinical workflow brings many benefits to both quality and clinical research projects,” said Justin Starren, director of the Center for Data Science and Informatics at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine and principal investigator of EASI-PRO.

The multi-site grant, awarded to Northwestern, University of Chicago, University of Illinois at Chicago, University of Alabama at Birmingham, University of Kentucky, University of Florida, University of Utah, Harvard Catalyst CTS and Southern California CTSI, is funded by

the Clinical and Translational Science Award (CTSA) program of NUCATS. Cerner and Epic have signed onto the project as integration collaborators.

NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY NEWS

MEDIA CONTACT: Marla Paul at 312-503-8928 or marla-paul@northwestern.edu

FOR RELEASE: Oct. 25, 2016

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About Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine

Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine, founded in 1859, attracts talented individuals to its faculty, staff, and student body through its cutting-edge research initiatives, superb clinical affiliates, global outlook, and innovative curriculum. Located in the heart of Chicago's Magnificent Mile, Feinberg has built a national reputation for excellence through a strong history of collaborative, interdisciplinary medical education and research, and along with Northwestern Memorial Hospital and Northwestern Medical Group is part of the premier academic medical center known as Northwestern Medicine. Feinberg holds the No. 17 spot in the 2017 U.S. News & World Report ranking of top research-oriented medical schools in the country.