

**Health Extension Rural Officer Coordinator/Agent Agreement**  
**between**  
**The Clinical and Translational Science Center**  
**and**  
**Office of the Vice Chancellor for Community Health**

One of the major goals of the University of New Mexico Clinical and Translational Science Center (UNM CTSC) is to greatly expand UNM HSC's capacity for community-based clinical research. In order to accomplish this, the CTSC has focused on changing the structure and process of community-based research by partnering with our Health Extension Rural Officers (HEROs) to enhance research participation and community awareness of research impact.

The Health Extension Rural Offices (HEROs) program aims to link UNMHSC programs and resources to rural communities across the four mission areas of education, clinical service, research and health policy-- with the vision of working with community partners to achieve the greatest improvement in health and health equity than any other state by the year 2020. Using the agricultural Cooperative Extension Service as a model, HERO agents build innovative partnerships from the grassroots by living in the communities they serve, linking local health needs with UNMHSC resources, improving local health services and systems, encouraging youth to finish school and enter health careers, recruit and retain a local health workforce, bring the latest research and health care practices to the community, and strengthen community capacity to address local health problems.

As part of the partnership efforts between the CTSC and the HEROs program the CTSC will support role expansion of HERO regional coordinators (herein known as "Coordinators") and agents (herein referred to as "Agents") who will assist in building relationships and benefiting the health and well-being of our communities state-wide. For purposes of this MOU, Coordinators and Agents will be collectively herein be referred to as HEROs.

## **I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this agreement is to define the responsibilities of the HEROs Coordinators and Agent and the Clinical and Translational Science Center related to the Agent's expanded roles in bidirectional research communication between investigators and communities joined in sustainable clinical and translational research.

## **II. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PARTIES**

### **A. The CTSC will:**

1. provide 10% salary support plus fringe for each HERO listed in Attachment 1 ,
2. prepare a menu of active research studies at UNM and identify communities/regions where the research is relevant,
3. provide a history of past research accomplishments, and
4. provide training to HEROs in the following areas:
  - a. principles, range of strategies, and basic research design for community engaged research,
  - b. understanding researcher needs for community-based collaborations and required metrics re: NIH standards (new studies initiated, participants enrolled, results/impact, publications),
  - c. techniques for educating community groups and individuals on CTSC related research,
  - d. techniques on gathering community views on research priorities, acceptable and unacceptable research protocols, and implications of research findings,
  - e. recognizing research questions/priorities in the field and facilitating connections with researchers,
  - f. facilitate community participation in planning, approving and conducting research, and

- g. translate research results into action through constructing community or issue briefs, presenting in community settings, and getting results into to local media.
  - h. report on any mid-course corrections implemented to improve communication and program effectiveness
- B. The Vice Chancellor for Community Health will:
  - 1. provide supervision and oversight of HEROs,
  - 2. conduct periodic meetings with the CTSC Partnership for Health Research Unit (PHRU) Program Manager to review activities of the HEROs, and
  - 3. ensure HEROs workload is consistent with the expectations of this agreement and that requested effort does not exceed the program's capacity.
- C. The PHRU Program Manager will:
  - 1. serve as a day-to-day link between researchers and HEROs on research related issues, making assignments, relaying study information, facilitating links, checking on how interaction is progressing
- D. Each HEROs will:
  - 1. Time Commitment
    - a. allocate time to the CTSC as directed by the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Community Health. Time allocation will be dependent on demographic considerations and research activity.
  - 2. Training
    - a. be required to attend bi-directional training twice annually
    - b. be responsible for informing CTSC on
      - i. Role, capacity, strengths of HEROs in facilitating field
      - ii. Importance of engaging community in research steps, of ensuring that research outcomes are presented to community, translated (where appropriate) into action or policy and/or impact on community health
      - iii. Importance of HEROs' participation in designing community training program for researchers
  - 3. In-Reach (field to HSC) efforts will include, but are not limited to:
    - a. present their priorities and topic ideas from the region/community they represent to CTSC researchers on a quarterly basis. These might include top state County Health Council priorities which are (in order of priority): Addictions and Mental Health, Obesity and Diabetes, Teen Pregnancy, Access to Care and Violence.
    - b. amplify the impact of previous efforts by offering research related technical assistance and expertise to leverage future research efforts and endeavors targeted at sustainability
    - c. bring diverse voices from the community to inform the planning, design and execution of research (i.e., community strengths, needs, and priorities)
    - d. interact with PIs and other study related personnel to learn about new research opportunities
  - 4. Out-Reach (HSC to field) efforts will include, but are not limited to:
    - a. help set up meetings between PIs and key community stakeholders
    - b. help PIs recruit subjects into studies
    - c. link researchers with established, long-term community partners (i.e., Health Councils, community hospitals, practices, local media)
    - d. report to region/community represented by the HERO regarding research opportunities
    - e. educate the region/community represented by the HERO on the meaning of research; demystify perceptions; generate interest in participation
    - f. assure research outcomes are translated into community action and policy (i.e., medical practices, hospitals, branch campuses/community colleges and public schools)
    - g. disseminate relevant findings of past, current and future research to the HERO's respective region/community; Provide community presentations to CTSC/Office of Community Health to be used as basis for reports and posting on respective websites
    - h. advise CTSC researchers on potential community collaborators for their research

- i. serve as CTSC representatives as selected Community Health Council and Tribal Health Council meetings
  - j. monitor and promote long-term, positive impacts on the HERO's region/community after researchers leave (i.e. grant-writing, program planning and development, coaching)
  - k. disseminate research participation opportunities at UNM
5. Meetings and Reporting
- a. Coordinators (who will represent themselves and their regional Agents) will:
    - i. meet quarterly as a group with the Vice Chancellor for Research, CTSC Community Engagement and Research Component Leaders, PHRU Program Manager and the Vice Chancellor for Community Health to review progress on particular grants, trouble-shoot, and identify needs and strategies in a bi-directional mode. Particular researchers may be asked to join the meeting on an ad hoc basis, and
    - ii. submit quarterly reports to the CTSC Community Engagement and Research Component Leaders, in writing, on a mutually designed form on such topics as 1) community requests, 2) CTSC PI requests and responsiveness, and 3) communities visited and contacts made, 3) work plan for the quarter for that research grant and progress made.

### III. GAUGING EFFECTIVENESS

The effectiveness of the HEROs program will be evaluated using the following metrics:

- A. HERO effect on UNM Researchers (CTSC trainers of HEROs)
  - 1. Studies in communities
  - 2. Participants enrolled
  - 3. Publications and grant submissions (see Attachment 2 schedule)
- B. HERO effect on NM Communities (HEROs training of CTSC)
  - 1. Appropriate orientation of CTSC researchers value and role of HEROs
  - 2. Appropriate introduction of researcher to community of interest
  - 3. Study outcomes reported to community
  - 4. Measurable impact of study on health of community (Vision 2020)

### IV. TERM AND TERMINATION

The initial term of this agreement is from July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012. The agreement shall continue for consecutive budget periods thereafter unless terminated by either party. Support for individual HEROs may be terminated if the HERO fails to carry out responsibilities as outlined above.

Effective Date: **July 1, 2011**

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Arthur Kaufman, M.D.  
Vice Chancellor for Community Health

Date: 7/8/11

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Richard S. Larson, M.D., Ph.D.  
Vice Chancellor for Research

Date: 7/8/11