

WIM 4/17/2007

Topic: Collaboration between basic scientists and clinicians

Clinicians and basic scientists involved in the MCG WIM organization met 2/6/2007 to determine how to facilitate translational collaborations. These are the meeting minutes.

Our Needs:

1. Clinicians:
 - a. Research experience for promotion criteria, publications
 - b. Partnerships with basic science researchers for training in scientific methods(is this the right word), help with protocol development and grant writing
 - c. Partnerships with basic scientists for idea exchanges in ways to investigate the basic science of clinical observations.
2. Basic Scientists
 - a. Hands to do the work
 - b. Money to do the work
 - c. Partnerships with clinicians for access to patient specimens/data
 - d. Partnerships with clinicians for idea exchanges in ways to transition basic science observations into clinical/translational research

Proposed solutions:

1. Clinicians need to partner with basic scientists for research training, to obtain more publications, and to investigate important clinical questions and observations.
2. Basic scientists need to partner with clinicians for access to patient materials, to translate basic science findings to the bedside, and to investigate the science behind clinical observations. I strongly suspect that if the clinicians and basic scientists would communicate, the clinicians could define the problem, the scientists could define a way to investigate the problem.
3. The hands to do the work issue: Recruitment of the many medical students, housestaff, and fellows who want to do research but don't know where or how because they are all "new" by definition and "transitioning" through the institution on their career paths.
4. The money issue: I think this is the easiest of all. New faculty have start up packages, older faculty have grants, each department has seed monies.
5. A monthly transitional research meeting that is ongoing.

The meeting outcome/Our goals:

Dr's Silva, Bollag and myself felt the best way to meet these needs would be to;

1. Use our next WIM meeting as a general introduction between the basic scientists and the clinicians. They will e-mail their people specifically looking for those who desire clinician partners
2. I will do the same and e-mail the group looking for clinicians with ideas they want basic science support on. We will introduce these two groups at our next meeting.
3. The hands to do the work: I have numerous contacts from multiple populations who wish to work in a lab for the research experience and publications. I would be willing to let WIM be the contact for these individuals. The Medical students are a problem as identified by Drs. Silva and Bollag because they are transient. I suggest we set up a list of projects for such folks who then "rotate" through the project. Unsure about authorship on papers here, but we can work on it. The interns/residents are busy, but a more stable population; the fellows are the most stable population. We will advertise these opportunities in the medical school, on our website, etc.
4. The Money: If a clinician develops an idea, he/she should finance with start-up/seed monies. If he/she cannot, the basic scientist will help with grant applications or already obtained grant funds.
5. The Best Ideas:
 - a. Dr. Silva suggested a spin off monthly Translational research meeting where folks would meet to discuss interests. This would be ongoing, open to all, and done in a daytime/lunchroom environment. Basic scientists would discuss their research, articles would be reviewed, clinicians would discuss their ideas.

b. Dr. Bollag suggested each department invite the basic scientists to their meetings/lectures so we will know who they are, what they do, and how we can partner.

The exact format for our next meeting remains fluid, we basically decided to have a formal WIM purpose statement, a definition of our current obstacles as defined above, a list of resources available through HR on seminars available for an overview of grant types, a very important hopefully informal meet and greet of basic scientists and clinicians, and a proposal for the monthly translational research meeting and our attempts to recruit and advertise to those who want lab/research experience but don't know how to get it.