The National Institutes of Health recently announced that stimulus dollars are now available for any active NIH investigators to apply for administrative supplements with the intent of “accelerating the tempo of scientific research on active grants.”

Anthony Jerrant, MD approached Michael Parchman, MD about adding STARNet as a 4th site in his currently funded National Cancer Institute project. He is planning to submit the administrative supplement in early June. The UC Davis School of Medicine selected STARNet because of its previous success with research projects as well as the available large Hispanic pool of patients.

If the administrative supplement is funded, STARNet will join four other sites in determining whether an interactive multimedia computer program that is personally-tailored to cognitive mediators of screening behavior can activate patients to undergo colorectal cancer screening. Screening methods targeted will be fecal occult blood testing, flexible sigmoidoscopy, and colonoscopy. Each participant will complete the personally tailored, touch screen program on a laptop in the primary care office before their previously scheduled visit. STARNet will need to recruit 350 patients for the research study over a one year time period.

We will keep you posted on funding status and next steps.

Look for Abel Muñoz, MD of Muñoz Family Medicine Clinic in Austin and Michael Parchman, MD, MPH of the Health Science Center in an upcoming issue of the Journal of the American Board of Family Medicine.

Their accepted publication describes STARNet’s ten month observational study which examined skin and soft tissue infections presenting at four primary care clinics and assessed if historical risk factors and examination findings were associated with a positive MRSA culture.

Across 4 primary care practices, 164 cases of skin and soft tissue infections were collected over 10 months. Of the 94 with a culture, 63 (60%) were MRSA positive.

History and physical exam findings, with the exception of presentation with an abscess, may not be good predictors of which patients with a skin or soft tissue infection have MRSA. Presumptive treatment of skin and soft tissue infections presenting in community primary care settings for MRSA may be indicated.

In addition to the upcoming publication, the MRSA article will also be discussed in an editorial planned for JABFM.
The NIH funded STARNet ABC Intervention study is just at the end of the second year of this five year project. The ABC Intervention study is empowering clinics to activate patients with their ABCs (A1C, blood pressure, and cholesterol). All but two of the needed forty clinics have been successfully recruited and ten of the twenty clinics in the initial intervention arm have completed the practice facilitations. For those of you in the delayed intervention group, you should hear from us in the next 2-3 months! If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Raquel Romero at 210-288-4825.

A few **preliminary results** of the data collected thus far are:

1. Patients who report that their care is more consistent with the Chronic Care Model are more likely to take their medications regularly (see [www.improvingchroniccare.org](http://www.improvingchroniccare.org) for more information about the chronic care model).
2. Clinics were staff report a better team learning climate are more likely to have implemented more elements of the chronic care model.

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**Looking for Best Practices regarding Tobacco Cessation Counseling and Billing**

*Do you counsel your patients that smoke about cessation techniques?*

*Do you have experience with billing for cessation counseling?*

If yes, please contact Holly Hayes for someone to follow-up with you individually.

Phone: 210-567-7816, Fax: 210-567-7820, hayesh@uthscsa.edu
STARNet is one of 14 practice-based research networks around the country that will be working on a contract from the Agency for Healthcare Research & Quality (AHRQ) to evaluate a “Survey on Patient Safety.”

The purpose of this contract is to conduct large-scale testing of the newly-developed Medical Office Survey on Patient Safety (SOPS). The surveys will be used to assess the safety culture of each participating practice, and will also create a benchmarking database for the survey.

This study will solicit input from physicians, nurse practitioners and/or physician assistants, as well as practice staff. Study materials include:

1) practice characteristics survey [nurse or office manager]; 2) Survey on Patient Safety (SOPS) [physician and all staff]; and 3) follow-up online qualitative survey [physician and office manager].

Each participating practice will receive a practice-specific report on quality improvement issues such as access to care, coordination with other medical settings, standard safety practices in your office setting, communication and follow-up, etc. The survey can be viewed online at: http://www.ahrq.gov/qual/patientsafetyculture/mosurvindex.htm

We are hopeful that this consortium of networks will continue to work together in the future. Talks are already underway with AHRQ and a DC-based Contract Research Organization to build on the information and insights gained from this survey.

Any practice interested in participating should call Dr. Walter Calmbach at 210-358-3885 or complete the form below and fax the info to 210-223-6940.

Fax Back Form to Participate in Patient Safety Survey

Please indicate your interest level in joining the “Survey on Patient Safety”

Name: ____________________________________________

☐ I am very interested. Please keep me informed of what the next step will be.

☐ I am somewhat interested. Please have someone call me to answer my questions.

☐ I am not interested.