Developing Logistical Guidelines for Adaptive Platform Trials: "Lessons Learnt from COVID-19 Adaptive Platform Trials"

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Benefits: Students are eligible to receive an annual stipend of $31,000. Additionally, they are encouraged to apply for available scholarships to supplement this stipend.

Application deadline: Applications will be accepted until Friday, June 27 2025 (5:00 PM

Eastern Time). Results will be announced via e-mail in August 2025. Please submit a cover letter and resume to upstreamlab@unityhealth.to.

Program duration: September 2, 2025 to August 28, 2026 (1 year)

Summary: The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the critical need for rapid and effective methods to evaluate potential treatments. Adaptive platform trials (APTs) have emerged as a promising alternative to traditional randomized controlled trials (RCTs), offering flexibility, reduced duration, and cost savings. This study aims to develop logistical guidelines for setting up APTs more efficiently for other diseases or future pandemics, based on lessons learnt from three COVID-19 APTs—TOGETHER, PANORAMIC, and REMAP-CAP.

Objectives:

1. To identify key challenges, solutions, opportunities, and lessons learnt from the TOGETHER, PANORAMIC, and REMAP-CAP trials.
2. To develop relevant logistical guidelines for creating and operating APTs for other conditions and future pandemics.
3. To engage a broad set of stakeholders in the guideline development process.

Methodology:

Data Collection and Analysis:

- Utilize findings from Part 1 of the study (Adaptive platform trials in pandemics: Evaluating COVID-19 case studies and developing guidelines for future health emergencies » Upstream Lab), which involved a multiple case study analysis of the TOGETHER, PANORAMIC, and REMAP-CAP trials.
- Focus on key challenges, solutions, opportunities, and lessons learnt from these trials.
- Analyze and interpret data to extract meaningful insights for guideline development.

Guideline Development:

- Develop logistical guidelines based on the insights gained from the analysis.
- Engage a broad set of stakeholders, including researchers, clinicians, policymakers, and patients, in the guideline development process.
- Ensure the guidelines offer a structured roadmap for establishing and operating APTs more efficiently.

Impact: Aligned with CIHR's dedication to innovation in health research, this adaptive platform trial study aims to enhance Canada's readiness for future health emergencies. By focusing on the logistical innovations offered by APTs, the study seeks to reduce the time between the emergence of a health threat and the clinical research response, thereby improving patient engagement, outcomes, and system efficiency.

Eligibility/Educational Requirements:

Bachelor's Degree: A Bachelor's degree in a relevant field such as Public Health, Clinical Research, Epidemiology, Biostatistics, Medicine, or a related discipline.

Master's Program Enrollment: Enrollment in a Master's program in Public Health, Clinical Research, Epidemiology, Biostatistics, or a related field at the Institute of Health Policy, Management and Evaluation (IHPME).

Relevant Coursework: Courses in clinical trial design, biostatistics, epidemiology, health research methods, and data analysis. Specific courses on adaptive trial designs and methodologies would be highly beneficial.

Experience:

Research Experience (preferred): Prior experience in clinical research, particularly in the design, conduct, or analysis of clinical trials.

Experience with adaptive trial designs or platform trials is highly desirable.

Data Management and Analysis:

Proficiency in data management and statistical analysis software (e.g., SAS, R, STATA). Experience in handling and analyzing large datasets.

Project Management (*preferred*): Experience in managing research projects, including planning, execution, and reporting. Strong organizational and time management skills.

Stakeholder Engagement (*preferred)*: Experience in engaging with various stakeholders, including researchers, clinicians, policymakers, and patients. Strong communication and collaboration skills.

Ethics and Regulatory Knowledge (*preferred*): Understanding of ethical and regulatory requirements for clinical trials. Experience in navigating ethics review processes and regulatory submissions.

Additional Skills:

Appreciation of Health Equity and Social Justice: Students must demonstrate an understanding of health equity and social justice, highlighting the importance of fair access to healthcare and the social determinants of health.

Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving: Ability to critically analyze research findings and identify key challenges and solutions. Strong problem-solving skills to develop practical and effective guidelines.

Writing and Documentation: Strong writing skills for drafting guidelines, reports, and research papers.

Attention to detail in documenting research processes and findings.

Adaptability and Flexibility: Ability to adapt to new information and changing circumstances in a dynamic research environment. Flexibility to work on multiple aspects of the project simultaneously.

If you have any questions or concerns, contact the Talent Development Coordinator (Dr. Isobel Okoye) at Isobel.Okoye@unityhealth.to