Innovative Pilot Projects Facilitating Centralized Support

FSU | CTSA

FSU Health

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Introduction

- The NIH Clinical and Translational Science Awards (CTSA) program provides a framework for innovation and serves as a center for more risky experimentation, designed to enable the testing and refinement of new ideas and methodologies.
- Lessons learned from the CTSA's pilot projects inform the development of new procedures and practices, enabling universities to identify successful initiatives that can receive centralized support and be implemented more broadly.
- As part of the FSU Health Initiative, the Office of the Vice President for Research coordinated specialized support services for all types of health research, known as Health Research Connections (HRC).
- Three support units (i.e., Hubs) within HRC were either developed by the CTSA or the CTSA played a significant role in the program's growth: **Biostatistics and Informatics, Clinical Research, and Community Engagement.**
- At FSU, the UF-FSU CTSA has supported several key milestones in strengthening research capacity. The pilot projects listed below serve as examples and are at various stages of development.

Pilot for Recruitment and Study Access

Opportunity: Limited visibility and access to ongoing research studies for the public.

Participate in Research Website
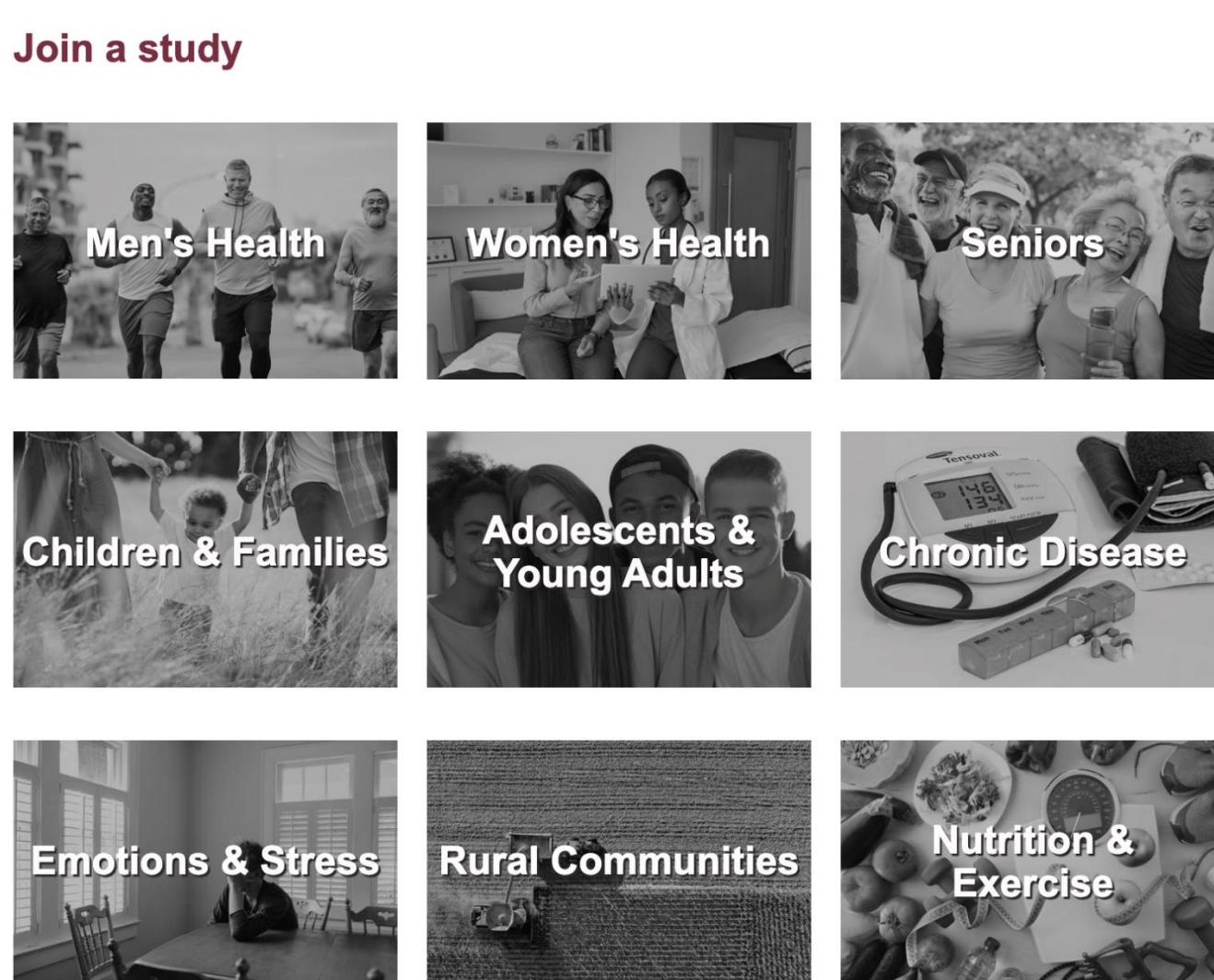
CTSA Solution:
The Participate in Research website was developed in 2021 to connect community members to FSU-led research opportunities and is presented by topic and population.
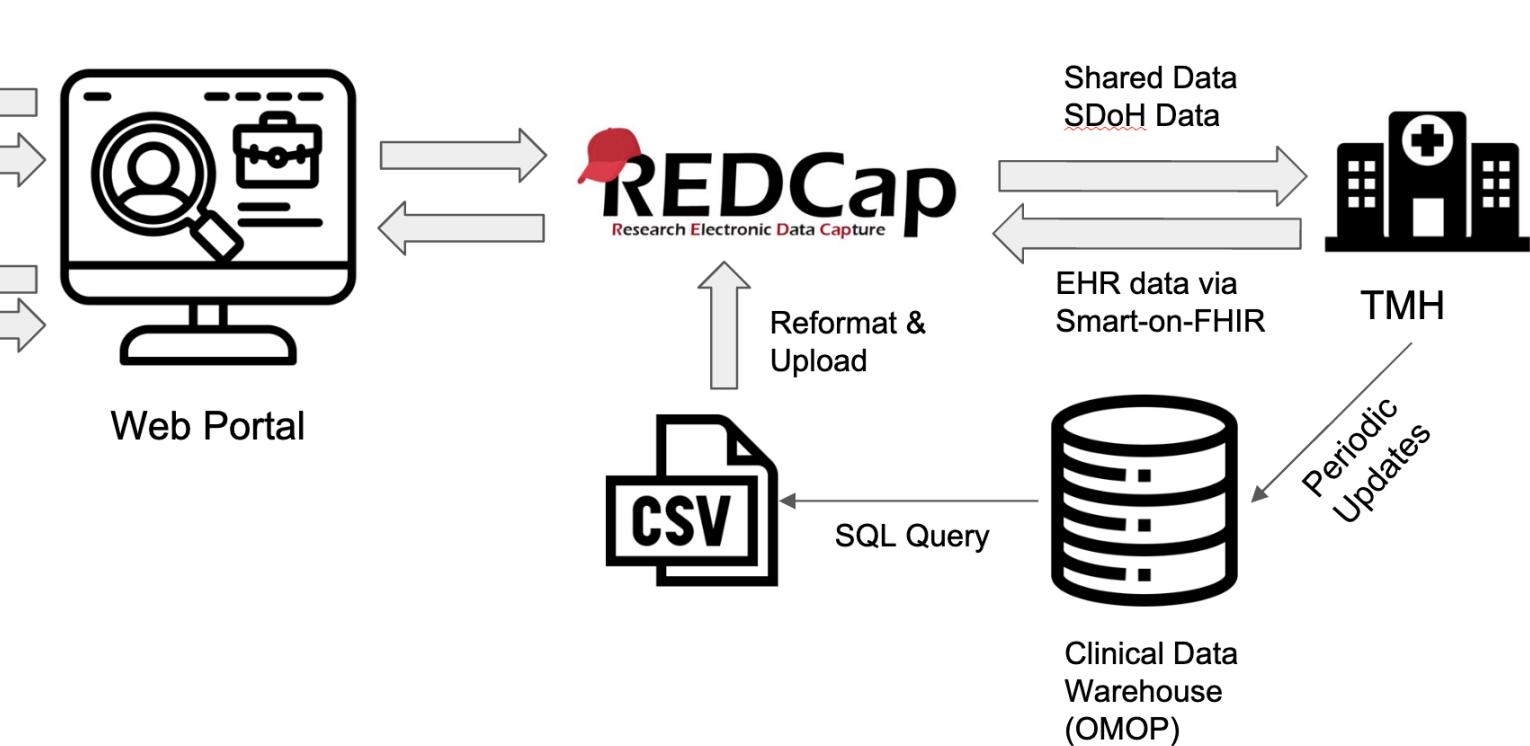
Centralized Uptake:
Building on the community website, additional investment was made to precisely connect community members to research studies by allowing them to create participant profiles and receive study updates.

FSU Health *ResearchLink*

Pilot for Enhanced Electronic Data Capture

REDCap — Research Electronic Data Capture

FSU REDCap
Opportunity: Need for a secure, HIPAA-compliant data collection platform tailored to FSU's clinical research needs.

CTSA Solution: Supported the implementation and training for MED REDCap, now used across colleges with self-guided modules and monthly "Lunch & Learn" sessions.

Centralized Uptake:
Under the CTSA and the College of Medicine, the REDCap program was initiated, and its footprint expanded to over 500 users and 2,100 projects before the migration to central ITS. A secure Microsoft Azure instance now allows for HIPAA-compliant storage and meets the necessary security requirements, and monthly workshops are offered by ITS.

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Pilot for Trust Building and Service

Community Engagement and Outreach
Opportunity: Need for deeper, bidirectional partnerships with communities and organizations.

CTSA Solution: Assisted in institutionalizing a Community Engagement Hub with Community Research Coordinators and Health Workers who co-lead town halls, outreach, and research collaborations across Florida.

Centralized Uptake:
Over the last CTSA award period, the information collected, programs started, and relationships built through work with the NCRT-CE team provided a framework for how the central research office could build trust, support researchers, and enhance collaborations with the community.

NCRT-CE Network for Clinical Research, Training, and Community Engagement

FSU Health COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Pilot for Research Support & Integration

Opportunity: No unified system for tracking research support or submitting service requests.

CTSA Ticketing System

CTSA Solution: The NCRT-CE and BIRD ticketing system was piloted and launched in 2023. The system, built in REDCap, streamlined research service tracking and access and was used for CTSA reporting.
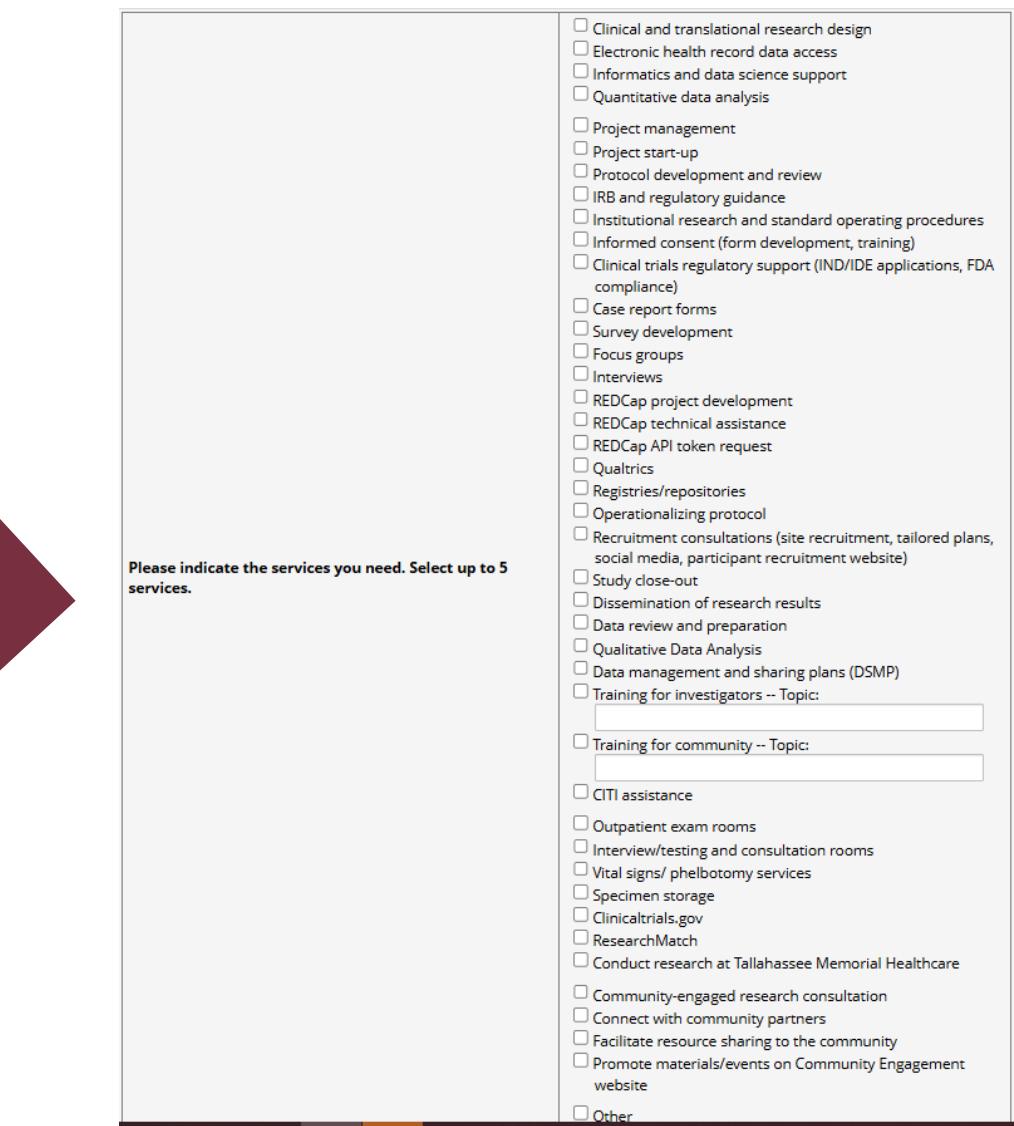
Research Request Portal and HRC
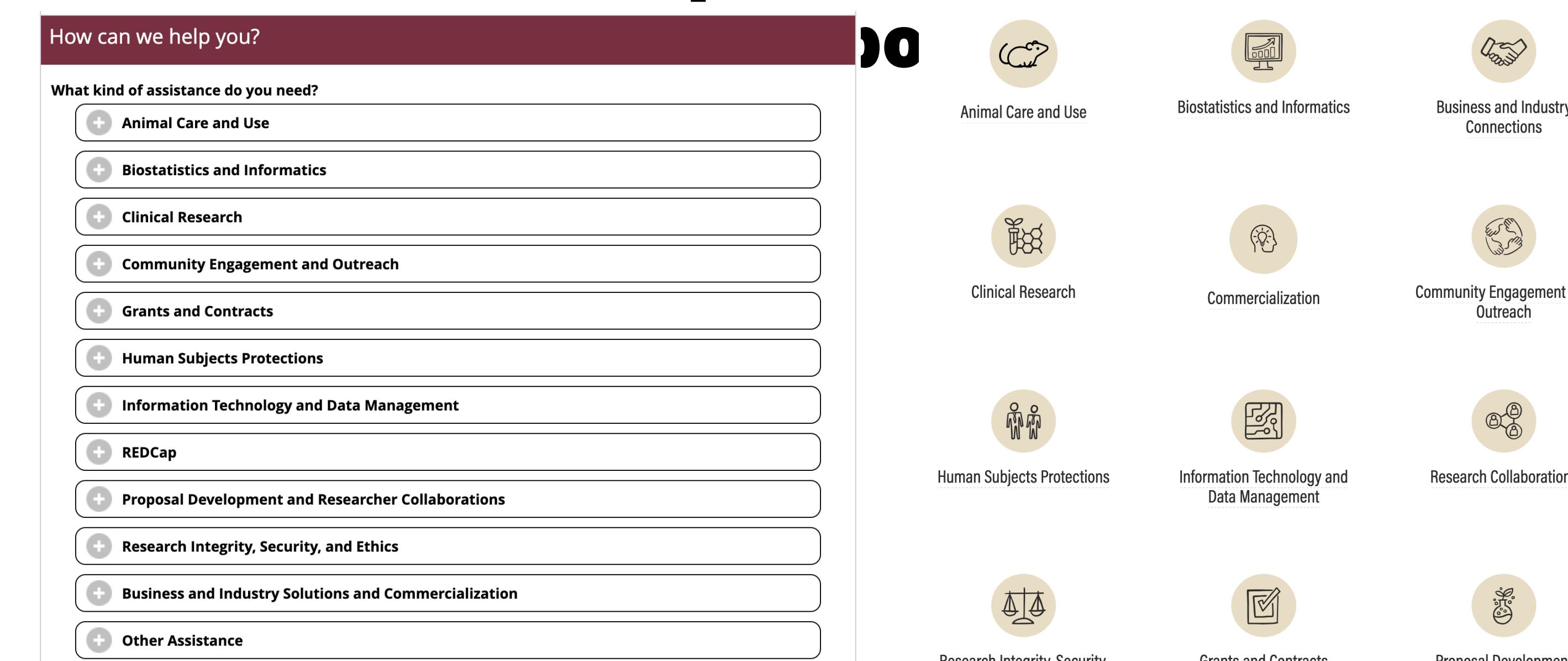
Centralized Uptake:
Building on the clinical research, community engagement, and biostatistics and informatics offerings, researchers now have direct, centralized access to a range of research support services through HRC. Hubs can concurrently respond to requests, providing comprehensive support. The HRC Switchboard offers surface-level insights into the Hubs, enabling researchers to learn more about the resources available to them.

Discussion and Future Directions

- Based on the initial feedback after deployment of HRC, the university is considering deploying this framework with a new "wrapper" that would be thematically tailored for other areas of research at FSU.
- The HRC system in REDCap is going through continual improvement and optimization.

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