



Virginia Coordinated
Clinical Research Network

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Virginia Coordinated Clinical Research Network Launched to Focus on Clinical Trial Research, Developing Medical Treatments, Scientific Advancements, and Real-World Applications

Established by the Virginia General Assembly, VCCRN Advisory Council Members Include Carilion Clinic, Eastern Virginia Medical School, George Mason University, Inova Health System, James Madison University, Old Dominion University, Sentara Health, the University of Virginia, Virginia Bio, Virginia Commonwealth University, the Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association, Virginia Tech, and William & Mary

RICHMOND, VA – From the development of new medicines and cancer treatments to gene therapy and advances in scientific understanding of serious conditions such as Alzheimer’s disease, clinical research is helping drive the future of medical innovation and patient care. To further support that work, a coalition of health care systems, institutions of higher education, and other organizations have united to help launch the [Virginia Coordinated Clinical Research Network](#) (VCCRN).

The VCCRN was established with [initial investment support from the Virginia General Assembly](#). Its mission is to strengthen collaboration among clinical, academic, and biotechnology and life sciences organizations to accelerate clinical research and trials across the Commonwealth to address health disparities, improve outcomes, and support economic growth. The biotechnology and life sciences sector has established a strong footprint in Virginia, which is home to more than 1,400 life sciences companies. The sector contributes \$8 billion to the state economy and employs more than 26,500 people. Globally, the value of the biotech market was \$1.37 trillion in 2022 and it is expected to grow at a compound annual rate of 13.96 percent from 2023 to 2030.

“The Virginia Coordinated Clinical Research Network marks a transformative step for our state’s health care landscape” said Virginia Health and Human Resources Secretary John Littel. “Through collaboration with renowned institutions, we are positioned to unlock the full potential of clinical research in Virginia. I look forward to seeing the ways this initiative will make Virginia best-in-class.”

Participating organizations on the [VCCRN Advisory Council](#) include Carilion Clinic, Eastern Virginia Medical School, George Mason University, Inova Health System, James Madison University, Old Dominion University, Sentara Health, the University of Virginia, Virginia Bio, Virginia Commonwealth University, the Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association, Virginia Tech, and William & Mary. The VCCRN will facilitate relationships between these organizations and others across the Commonwealth to create a robust statewide network for research and clinical trials.

“Investment in collaborative research opportunities will be an economic driver to the Commonwealth, attracting additional life sciences innovation and commercialization and providing patients with access to new treatments and cures,” said Virginia Economic Development Partnership President and CEO Jason El Koubi. “We look forward to supporting the Virginia Coordinated Clinical Research Network’s groundbreaking work.”

Academic research hospitals in Virginia are among those pioneering this work. Some examples of that include the study of MRI-guided focused ultrasound to use sound waves on the brain to address Parkinson’s disease symptoms, the development of an artificial pancreas system to support diabetes patients, Remdesivir antiviral drug trials to support treatment for COVID-19 patients, and the study of gut microbe transplantation as a means to combat alcohol addiction.

“Virginia’s hospitals and health systems are excited to support groundbreaking clinical research to develop next generation treatments for disease and infirmity,” said Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association President and CEO Sean T. Connaughton. “Strengthening collaboration between hospitals and our bioscience partners through the Virginia Coordinated Clinical Research Network is an opportunity to put Virginia at the forefront of cutting-edge medicine that improves lives and patient outcomes.”

Added Virginia Bio CEO John Newby: “The work of transition and commercialization are vital steps that must occur to take science from the bench to the bedside. Virginia Bio and its private sector members will greatly benefit from the connections and partnerships that VCCRN will foster to that end.”

“Our goal is simple,” said iTHRIV Principal Investigator and Co-Director Karen C. Johnston. “To let science guide us in getting treatments to patients sooner to improve human health. That is the mission of the National Institute of Health (NIH) funded Clinical Translational Science Award (CTSA) program that supports the work of the integrated Translational Health Research Institute of Virginia (iTHRIV), a consortium of researchers and community partners across the state who use data to improve health. That spirit is also embodied in the VCCRN, which leverages the power of collaboration with academic partners, healthcare institutions, industry

teams, and government agencies to advance the translational science to benefit the people of the Commonwealth. iTHRIV is excited to partner with the VCCRN on this important effort.”

About VCCRN: The [Virginia Coordinated Clinical Research Network](#) is a multi-stakeholder collaborative effort involving partners from the health care, higher education, and life sciences sectors to leverage, strengthen, and enhance the clinical research footprint in the Commonwealth. VCCRN is guided by an Advisory Council of participating organizations to create a robust statewide network for research and clinical trials.

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