



## Basic Researchers Interviews to Identify Gaps to Enabling Translation (BRIDGE Translation)

**Parisorn Thepmankorn; Celine Gelinas PhD; Nancy Fiedler PhD; Barbara Tafuto MLS PhD**

**Introduction:** Despite expanded interest in translational research, barriers in funding, infrastructure, staffing, training opportunities, and interdisciplinary collaboration still remain. Our goal was to interview basic science researchers to identify research barriers and potential areas for improvement.

**Methods:** After receiving an IRB determination for a quality improvement study, 15 New Jersey-based principal investigators (PIs) from various departments and at various stages of their career were virtually interviewed one-on-one by a trained medical student and asked a series of standardized questions about their subjective experiences with their institutions' research processes, training and mentoring, interdisciplinary collaboration, and intellectual property. The interview was then transcribed to complete an

anonymous, standardized REDCap form. Qualitative data analysis was performed to identify common themes, barriers, and gaps in translational research as reported by the PIs.

**Results:** Of the 15 PIs, 4 (27%) were assistant professors, 6 (40%) associate professors and 5 (33%) professors. 5 (33%) joined the institution

<5 years ago. The most common barrier was translational research funding. Time to navigate administrative and regulatory processes and access to clinical collaborators were other commonly reported barriers. One PI noted they were leaving the institution due to difficulty accessing clinical collaborators and patient samples. PIs with extensive training or who reported successfully conducting translational research noted fewer barriers. Suggested solutions included programs and grants to link basic scientists with clinicians, a streamlined IRB process, and better staffing to support research.

### Discussion:

The findings suggest a need to increase grant funding for translational research. Improving support staffing and minimizing administrative barriers would also be helpful. Improving dissemination of available resources, grants and guidance on administrative processes may further decrease barriers.

