

WHY COLLABORATE WITH MHRN?



NIMH funded the Mental Health Research Network with a goal of creating the infrastructure for population-based research in mental health to serve as a national resource. Our network brings together mental health researchers and the research departments embedded in large and diverse healthcare systems creating the opportunity to impact real world clinical practice in mental health.

As noted by NIMH Director, Tom Insel, not much progress has been made in the prevention and treatment of mental conditions compared to other disciplines: “In too many ways, it seems that too little has changed for those with serious mental illness over the past five decades. A new approach is needed in all areas. “

In a recent blog post he states “We need to be aware that mental disorders are immensely complex—too complex for scientists, clinicians, patients, or families to solve alone. Prevention, recovery, and cure—the NIMH vision—need a collective effort...we need a massive campaign to transform diagnosis and treatment.”

MHRN researchers have extensive experience conducting collaborative projects both within the Network and with external collaborators. We have unique assets that can be leveraged to play a key role in the campaign to transform mental health care, and we encourage you to join us.

Why collaborate with MHRN?

- Funded by a cooperative agreement with NIMH, MHRN benefits by NIMH being an integral part of our team – attending monthly Steering Committee meetings, attending our bi-annual in person meetings, one with NIMH staff at NIH, and participating in other ongoing MHRN activities like Scientific Interest Groups. They provide invaluable guidance in every step and keep us on track so that their priorities are our priorities.
- Experienced researchers with expertise not only in mental health research, but epidemiology, health services, economics, disparities, outcomes and quality assessment and pragmatic clinical trials as well. Researchers who are dedicated to our mission to transform mental health care through shared learning and shared resources. As content experts in specific scientific areas, they can collaborate on the development of relevant research questions.
- MHRN researchers meet regularly to discuss new ideas, and regularly engage with health care system leaders and patients to assess their needs and priorities. Based on their familiarity with available data at their site, MHRN investigators can inform study designs that are efficient and feasible, optimizing aspects of the study process such as data capture and participant recruitment.
- MHRN researchers have gained familiarity with data structure and analytic processes across other MHRN sites, facilitating cross-site collaboration.
- Research centers embedded in health care systems serving a diverse patient population of over 12.5 million patients in 15 states provide unique opportunities for research in real-world settings. Health systems in the network all include an integrated delivery system, the ability to define patient populations, and access to electronic medical and administrative records. Access to electronic medical records data is in relatively real time, with health data being updated regularly as health care happens.
- Electronic means of reaching out to many of these patients through health system patient portals, making study recruitment efficient.
- With our close affiliation with health systems and patients, we are well-positioned to ensure that relevant findings receive consideration in clinical practice.

“I have worked with the MHRN for the last 4 years. What strikes me about working with this team is their true collaborative spirit. It begins with the overall PI, Greg, who sets the tone for MHRN – one of collaboration and sharing; his vision of working within a true learning healthcare network is a vision shared by everyone in this network. It’s a pleasure working with such dedicated and supportive researchers.”
– MHRN Project Manager