UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH’s MRC
LB3P UPDATE ON COVID-RELATED BARRIERS

March 1-2, 2021

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Key Timeline Covid-Related Research Pauses & Restarts

- **March 23, 2020**: All University of Pittsburgh research activity was halted
- **June 3, 2020**: On-campus research restart
- **July 6, 2020**: Physical Therapy-Clinical & Translational Research Center (PT-CTRC) resumed operations
- **October 27, 2020**: Official start date of recruitment for LB3P study
- **November 20, 2020**: All University of Pittsburgh in-person (Tier 3 studies) research activity was halted
- **February 1, 2021**: In-person research activity permitted to resume
- **February 4, 2021**: Recruitment resumed; baseline visits scheduled at the PT-CTRC
Recently, our university has implemented several measures, including:

- Installing additional hand sanitizer dispensers
- More frequent cleaning of often-touched surfaces and common areas
- Managing arrival & departure times to thoroughly disinfect common areas and promote social distancing
- Placing signage throughout buildings to remind everyone of proper preventive measures
- Deep cleaning and disinfecting facilities
- Limiting the number of people in spaces to maintain social distancing of six feet
University of Pittsburgh Operational Risk Postures:

**Guarded Risk**

Faculty & Staff

- Work from home encouraged whenever possible
- Those who need to support permitted activities allowed on campus
- Research staff on campus based on Principal Investigator determination
  (Most activities are in person with virtual options and limited restrictions)

**Elevated Risk**

Faculty & Staff

- Work from home encouraged wherever possible
- Those who need to support permitted activities allowed on campus
- Virtual work encouraged for research personnel; some permitted on campus
  (Some activities are in person, but most are virtual)

**High Risk**

Faculty & Staff

- Work from home encouraged wherever possible
- Those who need to support permitted activities allowed on campus
- Research as permitted by senior leadership
  (Pitt is open, but activities are heavily restricted)
PT-CTRC Precautions for Research Restart

• All personnel of the PT-CTRC were required to complete the following:
  ➢ University of Pittsburgh’s Campus Restart Training
  ➢ PT-CTRC COVID-19 Mitigation Plan Power Point Presentation

• Guidelines:
  ➢ Devise and post mitigation policy signs in highly visible locations (i.e., clinic entrance, break room, intervention areas and office spaces)
  ➢ Support the maintenance of the inventory of supplies necessary to mitigate COVID-19 as outlined in the PT-CTRC mitigation policies, (face coverings, cleaning products, gloves, and required PPE for assigned tasks).
  ➢ Ensure that proper cleaning and disinfection procedures are being followed and performed by the responsible staff member.
  ➢ Monitor that proper hygiene is being performed by all staff and participants.
  ➢ Monitor for proper social distancing practices throughout the PT-CTRC facility.
  ➢ Support COVID-19 screening process for personnel working at the PT-CTRC and for study participants entering the PT-CTRC
  ➢ Support contact tracing efforts for possible symptomatic individuals who may have entered the clinic.
  ➢ In the event that a PT-CTRC staff member is confirmed or suspected positive for COVID-19: ensure symptomatic staff member follows Exposure Reporting Protocols; report location of event to EHS so the room can be cleaned by designated personnel; serve as a resource for supervisors and for persons performing contact tracing.
  ➢ Support the PT-CTRC and school to a Highly Restricted Phase (i.e., essential-personnel-only phase) should the need arise. Enact shut-down procedures listed in PT-CTRC mitigation policies.
Vaccination Rollout for Research Personnel

• All patient-facing (category 1a) research personnel have been vaccinated with at least the first dose.

• By the end of March all research personnel will be fully vaccinated.
Shutdown Impact

The shutdown of tier 3 studies has impacted the LB3P in the following ways:

• Cancellation of all participants that had been scheduled (many did not come back after reopening - lost effort);
• Pause and reopen all venues of recruitment;
• Entertain frequent phone calls from participants in waiting list;
• Refresh personnel training because of long hiatus without study activity.
How We’re Recruiting in the Era of COVID-19

• Current recruitment methods
  
  ➢ Pitt+Me Registry:
    https://pittplusme.org/studyarms/publicdetails?guid=ffa0b496-503f-4496-91d8-b03c513f9590
  
  ➢ Clinical Partners: LB3P study brochures will be sent to clinical partner patients that are actively seeking LBP treatment
    ➢ Impact of telemedicine and subject concern remain uncertain
    ➢ Delay in rollout of vaccine in PA will have an impact

• Potential method of recruitment

  ➢ Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation Departmental Registry

• Recruitment to date

  ➢ 50 participants have screened eligible through the Pitt+Me registry
  ➢ 38 participants scheduled for the month of March
  ➢ 15 participants are currently enrolled
Thank You!

Questions