

Bench to bassinet program seeks congenital heart disease treatments

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What: To help speed the translation of scientific discoveries into usable treatments in congenital heart disease, the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) of the National Institutes of Health launched the Bench to Bassinet Program. This program, which involves several major research institutions across the country, will be highlighted in the March 23 edition of the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology*. Congenital heart disease affects the lives of 40,000 newborns a year in the United States, and up to 2 million adults are living with congenital heart disease.

The Bench to Bassinet Program consists of three major research efforts. The two newest, highlighted in the journal article, are the Pediatric Cardiac Genomic Consortium and the Cardiovascular Development Consortium. The Bench to Bassinet Program also coordinates with the NHLBI-funded Pediatric Heart Network, a group of academic institutions in the United States and Canada conducting research to determine optimal therapies for children with congenital and acquired heart disease. New England Research Institutes serves as the coordinating center for the overall program.

Investigators in the Pediatric Cardiac Genomics Consortium will search the human [genome](#) for genetic defects that lead to heart problems. The participating research centers will study genetic data from hundreds of individuals born with [congenital heart disease](#) to uncover genes that may cause congenital heart disease, and how those genes influence the outcome of therapy. The institutes conducting this research are: The

Children's Hospital Boston and the Brigham and Women's Hospital, Mass.; The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, Pa. ; Columbia University Health Science, New York City; the Mount Sinai School of Medicine, New York City; and Yale University, New Haven, Conn.

Researchers still have many questions about the various complex pathways that lead to the creation of a healthy heart. Advances in technology and recent research findings make this an opportune time to launch an intensive collaboration designed to provide a comprehensive picture of the key steps in the development of healthy and abnormal hearts. Teams in the Cardiovascular Development Consortium will offer vital insights into heart development. The research institutes are: the J. David Gladstone Institutes, San Francisco, Calif.; Harvard University Medical School, Boston, Mass; the University of Pittsburgh, Pa.; and the University of Utah, Salt Lake City.

These two new programs, along with the Pediatric Heart Network, provide the framework to move fundamental knowledge rapidly into clinical practice, and to use insights from clinical practice to inform basic and genetic research.

More information: <http://www.benchtobassinet.net/>

Provided by National Institutes of Health

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