

FALL & WINTER 2025 CTBS NEWSLETTER

FSU CENTER FOR TRANSLATIONAL BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

Congratulations to the entire **UF-FSU CTSI team** for advancing a vision of translational research to improve health outcomes through collaboration and research innovation!

The University of Florida and Florida State University have been **awarded \$43 million** from the National Institutes of Health to accelerate the translation of scientific discoveries into real-world health solutions. Dr. Sylvie Naar, Distinguished Endowed Professor and Director of the FSU Center for Translational Behavioral Science, serves as Florida State University MPI on the UF-FSU Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI) award.



CTBS faculty and team members that will work alongside Dr. Sylvie Naar include Laura Reid Marks, PhD, Sara Green, MSW, Karen MacDonell, PhD, Kristina Feliciano, MSW, Sharry Anne Solis, MPH, Mama Yata (Trishay) Young, and Kayla Hicks, MPH.

FSU Council on Research and Creativity 2025 Seed Grant

Dr. Julia Sheffler is a co-investigator on a newly funded **2025 Seed Grant awarded by the FSU Council on Research and Creativity (CRC)**!

Led by Dr. Ravinder Nagpal, the team is exploring whether simple, targeted changes in diet could help restore a healthy gut and support memory and thinking as people age.



Can serious infections upset the balance of “good” bacteria in the gut and if so, how?

Could this affect brain health over time?

Welcome Dr. Prince N. O. Addo!



FSU College of Medicine Department of Behavioral Sciences and Social Medicine Postdoctoral Program, directed by Dr. Nicole Ennis.

As part of the FSU College of Medicine Department of Behavioral Sciences and Social Medicine Postdoctoral Program, CTBScience welcomed Dr. Prince N. O. Addo last fall. Dr. Addo's research explores how early-life psychosocial and behavioral factors, including sleep, depression, substance use, and HIV-related risk behaviors, influence long-term mental and cardiometabolic health.

Sara Green Receives Florida State University's Inaugural Ethos Award for Research Integrity and Ethics!

As the **first-ever recipient** of this award, CTBScience Assistant Director, **Sara Green, MSW**, was honored at the Compliance and Ethics Expo, and was joined by her team as she was recognized for her exceptional commitment to the highest standards of ethical conduct and accountability in research. Congratulations on this well-deserved recognition, Sara!





Dr. Prince Addo at American Public Health Association (APHA)

Dr. Prince Addo attended **APHA 2025 Annual Meeting & Expo in Washington, D.C.**, where he shared his research in two presentations, one speaking to how sleep habits during adolescence can affect heart health later in life and the other on how substance use during adolescence (including binge drinking, smoking, and marijuana use) is linked to a greater risk of heart disease in adulthood.



Rebecca Giguere Presents Research on HIV Testing Access

Rebecca Giguere, MPH, in a presentation on some of the research at CTBS. Her presentation, titled *"Mystery Shopping at Free HIV Testing Clinics in Florida"* focused on the challenges young men may face when trying to access HIV testing. By using "mystery shoppers," the team identified barriers related to anonymous testing policies at clinics, which will improve clinic accessibility and strengthen testing practices.

CTBS team: Andrea Cheshure, Sara Green, Jonathan Morgan, Milo St. Ives, Isaac Richardson, Drs. Ivan Balan and Sylvie Naar.



Dr. Nicole Ennis Presents at Cannabis Research Conference

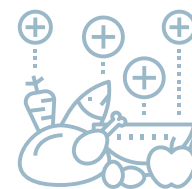
Dr. Nicole Ennis presented at the **9th Annual Cannabis Research Conference**, sharing findings on how medical marijuana may interact with other medications in adults age 50 and older. Her research found that medication interactions were uncommon and, when present, were mild to moderate. These results highlight the importance of monitoring medication use in older adults who may be taking multiple prescriptions.



Dr. Julia Sheffler Highlights Healthy Aging Research



During the **Team Science in Translational Research seminar** session, “*Studying Healthy Lifestyles: Why it matters and how to do it*,” Dr. Sheffler shared on her ICAN (Improving Cognitive Aging through Nutrition) program, which supports people at risk for Alzheimer’s disease or dementia through nutrition and healthy lifestyle strategies. She joined fellow panelists to discuss why studying healthy lifestyles matters. Together, they highlighted how nutrition and daily habits can play an important role in supporting healthier aging.



Center Researchers Present on HIV Prevention in North Florida

Sara Green, MSW, and Andrea Cheshure, MS, presented at the **2025 National Sexual Health Conference**. Their virtual presentation focused on the NIH-funded Big Bend Precision Prevention (BeBoPP) project, which aims to improve access to HIV prevention in North Florida. In the first phase of the project, the team worked closely with healthcare providers and young adults to better understand the factors that influence use of PrEP, a medication that helps prevent HIV. These findings will shape a future, community-driven program designed to reduce HIV risk among young people.



Welcome to CTBScience

Prince Addo, PhD *Postdoctoral Fellow*
Jayda Bass *Integrative Science for Healthy Aging*
Zachary Warhul *Young Adult Health Program*
Sharon Bettina Warrior *Young Adult Health Program*
Kamille Buck *Young Adult Health Program*
Charles Bastyr *Integrative Science for Healthy Aging*
Katelyn Hale *Health Justice Collaborative*
Christine White *Young Adult Health Program*

Thank you! Farewell

Vitoria De Melo *Integrative Science for Healthy Aging*
Tiana Baker *Integrative Science for Healthy Aging*
Iman Alinani *Integrative Science for Healthy Aging*

CTBScience Publication Highlights

Medical Marijuana and Driving Safety

This study looks at whether using medical marijuana regularly over a long period affects how well older adults drive in real-world conditions. Researchers focus on adults aged 50 and older who have chronic pain and may also be taking prescription opioids. By observing participants during actual on-road driving tests and tracking marijuana use, the study aims to understand how long-term marijuana use—alone or combined with opioids—impacts driving safety. The findings will help guide screening and safety recommendations for older drivers using these medications.



Ennis, N., & Classen, S. (2025). An open-road driving performance task to examine long-term medical marijuana use and prescription opioid positivity among adults aged 50 years and older: Protocol for an observational trial. *JMIR Research Protocols*, 14, e77944. <https://doi.org/10.2196/77944>

Adolescent Bedtimes and Heart Disease Risk

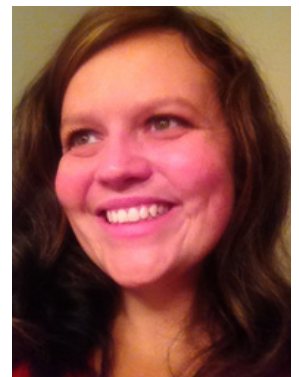
This study examines whether having a parent-set bedtime during adolescence influences the risk of developing heart disease as an adult. Using long-term data from a large national study, researchers found that teens with later bedtimes—or no set bedtime at all—were more likely to have higher heart disease risk decades later. Sleep quality helped explain part of this relationship. The findings suggest that earlier, consistent bedtimes during adolescence may support better heart health in adulthood.



Addo PNO, Liese AD, Zhang J, Weaver G, Brown MJ (2025) Parent-set bedtime in adolescence is associated with future cardiovascular disease risk: Evidence from the Add Health study. *PLOS ONE* 20(12): e0339044. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0339044>

Asthma Self-Management Theory

This paper introduces a new theory that explains how adults manage their asthma day to day. The theory considers personal habits, social and economic factors, environmental conditions, and access to healthcare. Built on an established nursing theory, it helps explain why some people manage their asthma better than others. This framework can guide future research and improve education and care strategies for adults living with asthma.



Hall AL, MacDonell KK, Vallerand AH. Middle-Range Theory of Asthma Self-Management. *Nursing Science Quarterly*. 2025;39(1):40-47. [doi:10.1177/08943184251374542](https://doi.org/10.1177/08943184251374542)