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FAU Launches COVID-19 Registry and Repository to Advance Research

*Enrolling Participants with Prior Documented Positive Test
Reports*

February 15, 2021 – Researchers from Florida Atlantic University have launched a registry and repository to contribute to new discoveries and knowledge related to COVID-19. They are recruiting participants who have had a positive test and collecting blood and saliva samples for the repository. Specimen collection will support research efforts related to the novel coronavirus transmission and will enable

scientists to develop new approaches for prevention and control, as well as novel therapeutics that may provide broad benefit for future public health, biomedical and translational research initiatives. In addition to studying current research questions, these samples also will be stored for future investigations.

“Creating this registry and repository will help us address key knowledge gaps regarding COVID-19 epidemiology and pathogenesis,” said Karin Scarpinato, Ph.D., FAU’s senior associate vice president for research. “We are looking for innovative sources of comprehensive, real-world COVID-19 data, and our university is uniquely positioned to gather this data and contribute knowledge related to this virus.”

The registry and repository is spearheaded by FAU’s Institute for Human Health and Disease Intervention (I-Health), one of the university’s four research pillars, and FAU’s Clinical Research Unit. The research team includes scientists and physicians from FAU’s Schmidt College of Medicine; Charles E. Schmidt College of Science; College of Engineering and Computer Science; Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing; and Division of Research.

“A study of this nature has scientific, public health and social value. The transdisciplinary group of investigators are collecting information from a diverse South Florida population, whereby participants may have recovered at home, had a telehealth visit or not have accessed the health system for treatment,” said Ximena Levy, M.D., M.P.H., director of the Clinical Research Unit, FAU’s Division of Research, who is spearheading the project. “These data and specimens will provide information about the progression of the disease, treatment response, long-term effects and economic effects, among others. Currently, there are no databases outside of research collecting this type of information.”

To participate in the COVID-19 registry and repository, participants must have a documented positive test report and currently showing no symptoms of COVID-19. Participants with a positive test will be invited to attend two visits to the research site for an interview and collection of blood and saliva samples. Each visit will last approximately 45 to 60

minutes and participants will be reimbursed for their time and transportation with a \$50 gift card for the first visit and a \$25 gift card for the second visit.

“An essential strategy for managing COVID-19 requires vast amounts of real-world data to enable us to find patterns that will help us to better understand this disease,” said Gregg B. Fields, Ph.D., executive director of FAU’s I-Health and a professor in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, FAU’s Charles E. Schmidt College of Science. “We will win this battle as we gain more knowledge about the way COVID-19 is being transmitted, symptom development over time after initial exposure, the efficacy of specific treatments used, efforts to contain the spread of the virus, the presence of specific ‘hot spots’ and especially patient outcomes.”

To participate in the COVID-19 registry and repository, appointments are required in advance. To register, visit fau.edu/research-admin/cores/clinicalresearchunit/tested-positive-covid-19/ or for more information, call or text 561-235-4467 or email crudor@health.fau.edu.

The study sites are located at the FAU Community Health Center, 720 Eighth St., U.B. Kinsey Site in West Palm Beach; and the FAU Clinical Research Unit, Building One (ME-104), 777 Glades Road, first floor, in Boca Raton.

FAU’s I-Health was created to advance health through pioneering research and practical applications. I-Health is redesigning the health care infrastructure to create novel intervention programs to provide patients and the community with health care for everyday needs as well as the most specialized services for complex diseases, illnesses and injuries. I-Health also focuses on aging patient populations to provide unique care that is not available elsewhere in the region. In addition to developing clinical trials and conducting clinical and translational research, I-Health will teach and train generations of health care professionals to meet South Florida’s diverse needs.

FAU's Clinical Research Unit's mission is to provide researchers at FAU with the facilities, tools, training, services and guidance to conduct high-quality clinical research. The Clinical Research Unit is a state-of-the-art core research space specifically designed to conduct clinical research, clinical trials, longitudinal studies and patient-outcomes-oriented research projects.

About Florida Atlantic University:

Florida Atlantic University, established in 1961, officially opened its doors in 1964 as the fifth public university in Florida. Today, the University, with an annual economic impact of \$6.3 billion, serves more than 30,000 undergraduate and graduate students at sites throughout its six-county service region in southeast Florida. FAU's world-class teaching and research faculty serves students through 10 colleges: the Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters, the College of Business, the College for Design and Social Inquiry, the College of Education, the College of Engineering and Computer Science, the Graduate College, the Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College, the Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine, the Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing and the Charles E. Schmidt College of Science. FAU is ranked as a High Research Activity institution by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. The University is placing special focus on the rapid development of critical areas that form the basis of its strategic plan: Healthy aging, biotech, coastal and marine issues, neuroscience, regenerative medicine, informatics, lifespan and the environment. These areas provide opportunities for faculty and students to build upon FAU's existing strengths in research and scholarship. For more information, visit www.fau.edu.

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