

The Lupus Nephritis Trials Network (LNTN) has recently been selected to participate in the Accelerating Medicines Partnership in Rheumatoid Arthritis and Lupus (AMP RA/Lupus). AMP RA/Lupus is a new research initiative funded by a public-private partnership between the National Institutes of Health and the pharmaceutical industry. The goal of AMP RA/Lupus is to identify molecular pathways which are central to disease pathogenesis, with the expectation that comprehensive understanding of these pathways will reveal novel biologic targets and accelerate the development of new agents to treat rheumatoid arthritis and lupus. Additional information about AMP RA/Lupus can be found at: <http://www.nih.gov/news/health/sep2014/niams-24.htm>

The LNTN will play a key role in the AMP RA/Lupus project by providing clinical data and materials necessary to perform cutting edge basic research into the biologic mechanisms underlying lupus nephritis. This key role is outlined in a grant awarded by the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS) to Betty A. Diamond, Feinstein Institute for Medical Research, and David Wofsy, University of California San Francisco. In addition to the project submitted on behalf of the LNTN, two other projects were selected to comprise the lupus nephritis component of the AMP RA/Lupus program. Those two projects are led by LNTN member Michelle A. Petri, Johns Hopkins University, and by LNTN member Jill P. Buyon, New York University School of Medicine, with Chaim Putterman, Albert Einstein College of Medicine, and Thomas Tuschl, Rockefeller University.

The research goals of the lupus nephritis component of AMP RA/Lupus include understanding the cellular and molecular signatures in lupus kidneys, blood, and urine, correlating these signatures with prognosis and response to therapy, and identifying new therapeutic targets for lupus nephritis. Numerous LNTN sites will have the opportunity to contribute to the AMP RA/Lupus project, and this broad base of participating LNTN investigators will be critical to the success of this new research initiative. The AMP RA/Lupus grant represents an important step for the LNTN by securing external funds for its members through a competitive peer-review process. It is a tangible demonstration of the LNTN's value in advancing high profile research in lupus nephritis. Other lupus nephritis investigators are encouraged to consider the LNTN as a potential resource when they plan their research and apply for funding.