

Karla Damus PhD MSPH MN BSN RN FAAN

Dr. Karla Damus is the BU CTSI's Senior Research Navigator and leads the Research Navigator Team (RNT). Karla is a perinatal epidemiologist, researcher, educator and nurse who draws on decades of expertise and experience to assist researchers and their teams toward maximum utilization of the BU CTSI's many services and resources.

Karla is also the BUMC/BMC Administrator of ClinicalTrials.gov and MCSR Research Licensure in the BUSM Office of Human Research Affairs (OHRA) and the Research Specialist in the BUSM Medical Education Office. She teaches epidemiology classes to first year medical students and teaches a course she developed on perinatal and child health services in the BUSPH. Karla has mentored students, residents, fellows and junior and mid-career faculty throughout her career.

Dr. Damus received her PhD in Epidemiology from UC Berkeley, a MSPH from the UCLA School of Public Health, and a MN and BSN from the UCLA School of Nursing. Dr. Damus has been on HRSA and NIH grant review committees, including the MCH review committee for program project and training grants, and was an inaugural member of the NINR NIH Advisory Council.

Karla is a Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing. She began her nursing career at UCLA as an operating room nurse and later taught nursing at the Mt. Auburn Hospital Nursing Diploma Program. In 2010, she joined the Northeastern Bouvé College of Health Science, School of Nursing faculty as a Clinical Professor, where she taught graduate courses including epidemiology, research methods, evidence-based practice and the role of the advanced practice nurse, and mentored many DNP and PhD students.

She started her research career at UCLA in the 1970s as the program manager for hepatitis related research and multisite trials in the GI Division. In the early 1980s, she became the epidemiologist on the NICHD national multisite Cooperative SIDS Risk Factors Study. From 1983-2010 she was on the faculty of the OB/GYN and Women's Health Department at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in the Bronx. She was an Associate Professor and the Director of the Division of Public Health and Community Programs from 1992 to 2009 and she concurrently served as the Senior Research Associate in the Office of the Medical Director at the National Office of the March of Dimes.

Karla conducted research to prevent adverse perinatal outcomes and reduce MCH disparities/promote equity in high risk, inner city diverse communities. In particular, she has contributed to the identification and mitigation of risks associated with birth defect and perinatal mortality, through her research in infant botulism, fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, SIDS, infant mortality, preterm birth and preconception health. She developed study instruments, interviews and medical records/autopsy abstraction forms, analyzed databases to identify risk factors including honey and infant botulism, designed and directed studies to reduce late preterm birth, and conducted and analyzed programs in high-risk inner city communities such as improving adolescent health and promoting consumption of folic acid to prevent birth defect.

In 2014, Karla transitioned to the BU School of Medicine as Research Associate in the Family Medicine and OB/GYN Departments, where she mentored faculty and trainees, wrote grants and directed research projects. She joined the BU CTSI in 2016 as the Clinical Research Regulatory and Education Manager, assisting clinical researchers at BMC/BUMC in the understanding of and compliance with the regulations, policies and best practices. In addition, she provided consultations on protocol planning, study design, IRB application submissions, study implementation, and evaluation, and conducted clinical research related trainings.