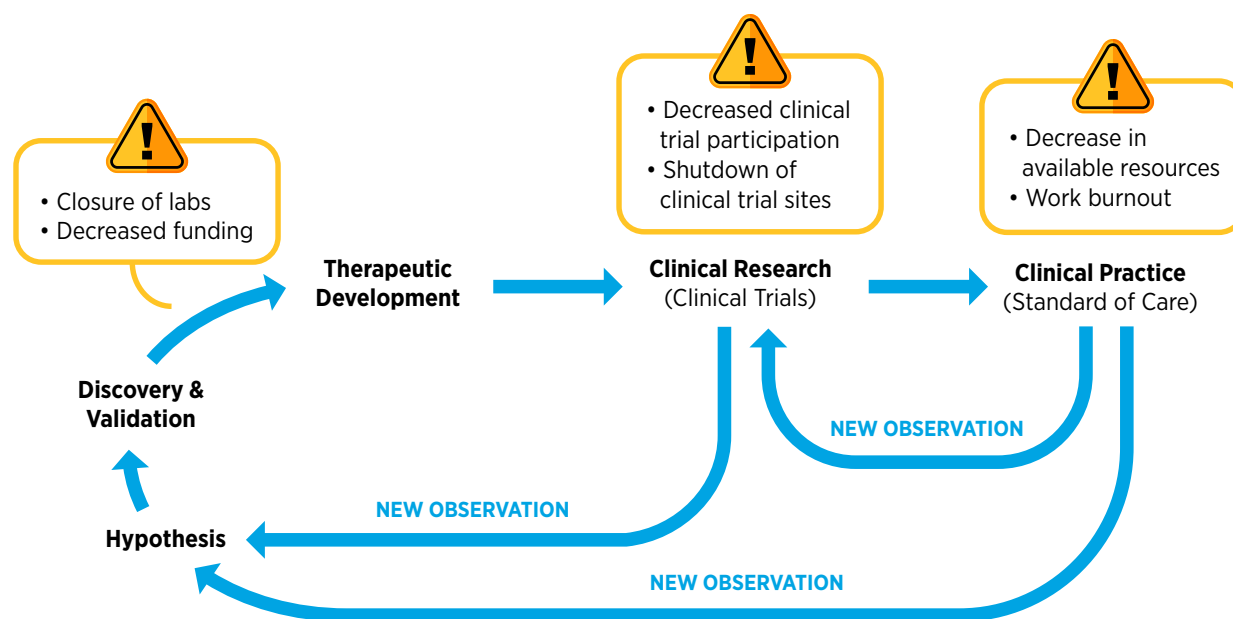


FIGURE 7 DISRUPTION OF THE MEDICAL RESEARCH CYCLE DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC



The medical research cycle is an iterative and self-driven process with a primary goal to save and improve lives. Findings from any type of research can lead to new questions and generate new hypotheses relevant to the practice of medicine. The discovery phase of the medical research cycle uncovers new targets for developing better and more effective treatments. Potential therapeutics first undergo preclinical testing to identify any harmful effects and determine initial dosing. Both

the discovery phase and preclinical testing of potential therapeutics were severely impacted by the pandemic because of the nationwide closure of academic institutions, substantial decrease in research funding from philanthropic organizations, and exit of many early-stage investigators from the field, including women and those from ethnic and racial minorities. Clinical trials that test the safety and efficacy of potential therapeutics were also negatively affected.