

Lessons from COVID-19 to Streamline Cancer Clinical Trials

The guidance issued by FDA and NCI during 2020 to minimize the adverse effects of the pandemic on the conduct of cancer clinical trials offers valuable lessons that can be implemented to streamline future oncology clinical trials, increase participation from diverse groups, and accelerate the pace of progress against cancer. These lessons include:

Consenting remotely, using electronic means, to participate in a clinical trial.

Currently, in-person consent is required to participate in a cancer clinical trial.



Allowing the use of any laboratory and imaging centers that meet the specifications required for participation in a clinical trial.

Currently, individuals are required to use a clinical trial-specified laboratory or imaging center.



Permitting telehealth approaches for routine clinical assessments, such as safety of the experimental treatment.

Currently, individuals are required to visit clinics in person for these evaluations.



Increasing the engagement of community-based network sites in conducting a clinical trial.

Currently, experimental therapeutics are only available at the institutes where clinical trials are being conducted.



Allowing home delivery of investigational oral drugs directly to patients and concomitant medication reporting via digital tools.

Currently, an in-person visit is required to receive experimental drugs.



Making clinical trials more accessible to rural areas and underserved populations.

Currently, underserved populations have limited access to clinical trials for a variety of reasons.

