

# A new paradigm for cancer research

November 5 2015, by Karen N. Peart

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Credit: Patrick Lynch / Yale

The \$100 billion federal government investment in the "War on Cancer," has produced only relatively modest progress in cancer research advances, according to Yale School of Medicine researcher Dr. Cary Gross, and his collaborator Dr. Ezekiel Emanuel.

The pair authored a recent viewpoint article in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, tackling the issue of value in [cancer](#)

research.

Gross and Emanuel recommend a [new paradigm](#) for research, one that focuses on improving efficacy and value, as well as ensuring population health impact and generating new knowledge. Specifically, they call for changes to the design of [clinical trials](#), charging the cancer research community to set a target of reducing the cost of trials by more than 50%.

"Not only has the investment in cancer research been substantial, but the costs of conducting research are increasing, and the available funds are increasingly scarce, the pair write. "Considering the substantial investment to date, it is difficult to make a compelling argument that simply increasing research funding will produce a decline in cancer mortality."

The team also recommended that all research data—including both clinical trial data as well as data derived from large care-delivery systems – be made available in a safe and responsible manner to the scientific community, to allow investigators to continue to reap new knowledge from data even after the initial studies are complete.

Finally, they recommend that researchers be held more accountable for the dollars that are at their disposal, in order to decrease waste caused by studies that are not initiated, completed, or published in a timely manner.

"We are at the cusp of a new era in cancer research, as insights into the most basic mechanisms underlying the development and progression of cancer have started to yield new therapeutic approaches," write Gross and Emanuel. "Now is the time to ensure that we are spending our research dollars wisely."

**More information:** Cary P. Gross et al. A Call for Value in Cancer Research, *JAMA Oncology* (2015). [DOI: 10.1001/jamaoncol.2015.3706](https://doi.org/10.1001/jamaoncol.2015.3706)

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