

# Report: Impact of COVID-19 on cancer center clinical trials operations

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Leveraging its network of leading North American cancer centers, the Association of American Cancer Institutes (AACI) circulated surveys to more than 100 cancer center members to assess how clinical trial office

operations were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

A [report](#) summarizing the results of the longitudinal series of [surveys](#) was published on July 19 in *JNCI Cancer Spectrum*.

The lead authors of "Quantifying the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Cancer Center Clinical Trial Operations" are Thomas J. George, MD, FACP, University of Florida Health Cancer Center; Tara L. Lin, MD, The University of Kansas Cancer Center; and Theresa L. Werner, MD, Huntsman Cancer Institute, University of Utah. Dr. George is chair-elect of the AACI Clinical Research Innovation (CRI) Steering Committee. Dr. Lin is the steering committee's current chair, and Dr. Werner is the committee's immediate past chair. Steering committee members and AACI staff also contributed to the report.

Data shared in the report show that AACI cancer centers were able to keep oncology trials available to patients while maintaining safety. Survey results demonstrated a sizeable decrease in interventional treatment trial accruals in both 2020 and 2021 compared to pre-pandemic figures.

Though the pandemic significantly impacted the national clinical research infrastructure, cancer centers were resilient, as evidenced by improvements in efficiencies and patient-centered care delivery. The pandemic necessitated rapid adaptation of trial operations to new best practices, including remote monitoring, remote consenting, electronic research charts, and work-from-home strategies for staff.

"While the data clearly show our centers' dedication to providing clinical trial options for patients with cancer, there have been substantial disruptions to the national capacity to conduct cancer [clinical trials](#), which will likely continue to be felt for the foreseeable future," said Dr. George.

**More information:** Thomas J George et al, Quantifying the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Cancer Center Clinical Trial Operations, *JNCI Cancer Spectrum* (2023). [DOI: 10.1093/jncics/pkad048](https://doi.org/10.1093/jncics/pkad048)

Provided by Association of American Cancer Institutes (AACI)

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