

Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Alliance’s Cancer Control and Population Science Subcommittee

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1. Background

The Memorial Sloan Kettering (MSK) Cancer Alliance Cancer Control and Population Science (CCaPS) Subcommittee began as the Minimal Risk Task Force in early 2018 before being elevated to a formal subcommittee on January 1, 2020. The subcommittee was formed by MSK and the MSK Cancer Alliance partners Hartford Healthcare, Lehigh Valley Cancer Institute, and Miami Cancer Institute as an initiative to expand research activities beyond oncologic therapeutic clinical trials and to include population science research.

2. Goals

The subcommittee’s goals and initiatives are to focus on the initiative to expand research activities beyond oncologic therapeutic clinical trials and to include population science research. The increase in study activity on population sciences and the number of shared publications is the metrics we would like to provide.

3. Solutions and Methods

The subcommittee is led by Allison Lipitz-Synderman, PhD, from MSK, and Andrew Salner, MD, from Hartford Healthcare, and is made up of representatives from each site and MSK research and administration staff. The subcommittee is tasked with facilitating collaborators across the MSK Cancer Alliances, supporting the development of new research ideas, facilitating the grant application process, streamlining the research protocol process, and tracking research collaborations.

4. Outcomes

In November 2020, the subcommittee issued its first ever request for applications designed to stimulate collaborative research involving diverse populations across academic and community oncology settings. During the first stage of submissions, 13 investigators submitted letters of intent. Out of the 13 letters of intent submitted, the grant award committee selected seven to proceed to full applications. Then, after a lengthy and rigorous review process, the committee announced that four proposals were selected for funding.

Furthermore, in 2021 the subcommittee had a total of 60 unique research collaborators covering all institutions, 20 grants submitted, and six projects opened, and is awaiting response on three peer-reviewed publications under review.

5. Lessons Learned and Future Directions

The subcommittee’s future goals and initiatives are to focus on the execution of ongoing projects, involve patients from each site so they can provide feedback on ongoing work, participate in new diversity and equity research, and engage trainees and junior staff from each institution to facilitate ongoing studies and introduce them to population science research.