Fostering Equity in Oncology Trials: A Multi-Campus Approach to Increasing Clinical Trial Participation

Brianne Bodin, Tooba Imtiaz, Ankeeta Joshi, Janice Mehnert, Douglas Marks, Bhavana Pothuri

Perlmutter Cancer Center
An NCI-designated Comprehensive Cancer Center

NYU Langone Health

BACKGROUND

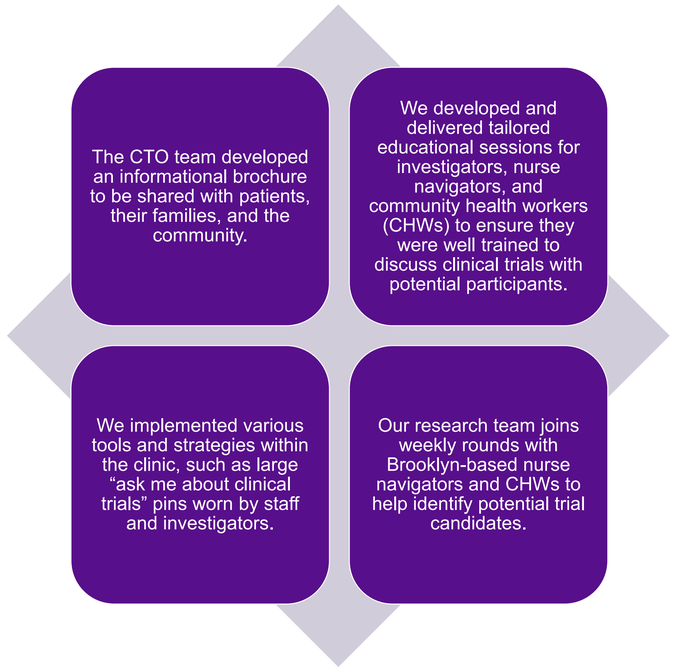
Achieving greater diversity, equity, inclusion, and access in cancer care necessitates ensuring that underserved populations have equal access to cutting-edge oncology trials. To address this, we implemented targeted outreach efforts at our Long Island and Brooklyn sites, which serve diverse communities. These efforts included partnering with the office of Community Outreach and Engagement (COE), creating site-specific presentations, advocating for multi-campus participation during sponsor discussions, and utilizing clinic tools to highlight the accessibility of clinical trials. Through these comprehensive initiatives, we aim to significantly enhance clinical trial accessibility for patients across Brooklyn and Long Island, fostering a more inclusive and equitable approach to cancer care.

GOALS

- Increase awareness of clinical trials.
- Enhance multi-campus participation in clinical trials to serve diverse populations.
- Ensure clinical staff are well-trained to discuss clinical trial participation opportunities.
- Increase diverse clinical trial accruals.

SOLUTIONS & METHODS

Collaboration with the COE was essential, as it allowed Perlmutter Cancer Center (PCC) Clinical Trials Office (CTO) leadership to understand and address perceived barriers to trial participation. One primary challenge identified was the lack of knowledge about clinical trials. In response:

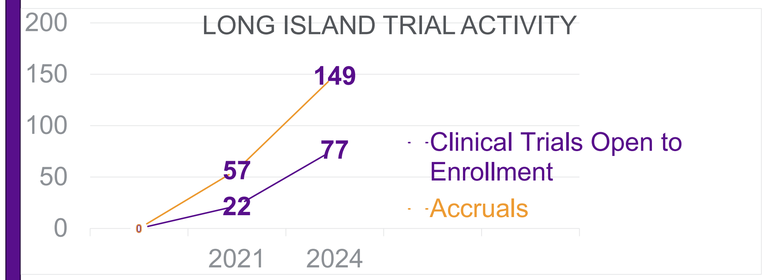


We also actively promoted the inclusion of multi-campus participation in clinical trials during discussions with sponsors and stakeholders.

OUTCOMES

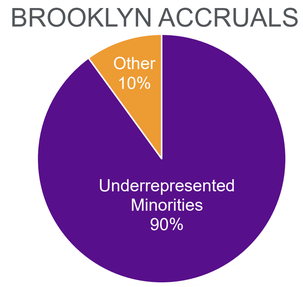
The PCC CTO has established an ongoing relationship with the COE, nurse navigators, and CHWs, and we continue to collaborate on new initiatives to further enhance clinical trial accessibility and participation.

Industry sponsors have reviewed and approved the inclusion of Long Island and Brooklyn campuses as additional sites on clinical trials during pre-site sponsor visits, resulting in expanded access for all PCC patients. This has led to increased patient enrollment from these areas and broadened the catchment area, fostering greater representation and improving patient recruitment.



The number of clinical trials offered at our Long Island site has increased by 250% from 2021 to 2024. Accruals at this location have also grown substantially, rising by 161% during that same period.

At our Brooklyn satellite, since September 2023, 90% of accruals (n=18) have been from underrepresented minorities, and 80% (n=16) reside in Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs), defined as areas with an inadequate number of healthcare providers.



LESSONS LEARNED & FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Ensuring the inclusion of historically underrepresented groups in clinical trials requires a multipronged approach, along with consistent effort and prioritization. The PCC CTO is piloting an AI prescreening program aimed at identifying trial candidates to improve efficiency, but also to eliminate implicit bias. To further enhance patient access to clinical trials, inclusion of Long Island and Brooklyn campuses will be a standard part of the conversation in all future trial discussions. Building on the success of expanded enrollment and the broader catchment area, it is crucial to maintain strong partnerships with pharmaceutical sponsors to ensure trials reflect the diverse patient populations of all campuses. Engaging with sponsors early in the planning process to prioritize multi-campus participation and using enrollment data to demonstrate the benefits of increased patient diversity for trial results and drug development will be essential. We anticipate continued growth and expansion at our Long Island and Brooklyn sites, with a sustained focus on ensuring equitable access and diverse enrollment in clinical trials.

For more information, please contact: Brianne.Bodin@nyulangone.org