Building Capacity and Operationalizing Hybrid and Fully Decentralized Clinical Trials in Community Oncology: A Thematic Analysis of Expert Roundtable Discussions

ASSOCIATION OF CANCER CARE CENTERS®

ACCC COMMUNITY ONCOLOGY RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Authors: Carolyn Trachtenbroit,[1] Al B. Benson III, MD, FACP, FACCC, FASCO,[2] Shaalan Beg, MD, MBA, FASCO,[3] Lora Black, RN, MPH, CCRP,[4] Jane Myles, MSc,[5] Daphne R. Friedman, MD,[6] Kristen Kipping-Johnson, MPH,[7] Rebecca Kottschade, MA, PMP,[8] Brittany McKelvey, PhD,[9] Jessica Moehle, CCRP,[10] Erin Pierce, MSN, APRN, FNP-C,[11] Archana Sah, MS Pharm., PMP,[12] Nicole L. Stout, DPT, CLT-LANA, FAPTA,[13] Wendy Vogel, MSN, FNP, FAPO,[14] Elana (Plotkin) Cerverizzo, CMP-HC[1]

Affiliations: [1]*Association of Cancer Care Centers*, Rockville, MD; [2]*Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University*, Chicago, IL; [3]*UT Southwestern Medical Center*, Dallas, TX; [4]*Sanford Health*, Sioux Falls, SD; [5]*Decentralized Trials & Research Alliance*, San Diego, CA; [6]*Durham VA Medical Center*, Durham, NC; [7]*University of Chicago*, Chicago, IL; [8]*Mayo Clinic*, Rochester, MN; [9]*LUNGevity Foundation*, Chicago, IL; [10]*Huntsman Cancer Institute*, Salt Lake City, UT; [11]*HonorHealth Research Institute*, Scottsdale, AZ; [12]*AS Pharma Advisors*, San Francisco, CA; [13]*American Cancer Society*, Atlanta, GA; [14]*Advanced Practitioner Society for Hematology and Oncology*, Hightstown, NJ

BACKGROUND

The Association of Cancer Care Centers' (ACCC) Community Oncology Research Institute (ACORI) is a series of initiatives focused on establishing clinical trials as a standard of care for all patients, regardless of where they are treated.

A 2024 multi-stakeholder summit revealed a critical need to address the misconceptions and operation gaps surrounding decentralized clinical trials (DCTs) in oncology and create a practical roadmap for implementation.

METHODS

ACORI partnered with the Decentralized Trials & Research Alliance (DTRA), to convene 3 roundtables with research experts across academic and community settings as well as industry sponsors, professional societies, and advocacy organizations. Case study presenters shared real-world barriers and solutions which were synthesized into cross-institutional themes and actionable opportunities.

Study Design & Process: From Summit to Scalable Solutions

1. **October 2024:**
   Summit – Barriers and facilitators surface across community oncology. Inconsistencies and misconceptions are identified as a priority DCT theme.
2. **November 2025 - April 2026:**
   Expert Roundtables – Three virtual sessions with academic, community, industry, professional society and advocacy stakeholders are held. Participants analyze real-world DCTs for barriers and solutions.
3. **December 2025 - April 2026:**
   Thematic Synthesis – Cross institutional opportunities are identified.
4. **April 2026 - September 2026:**
   Tools – Playbook and Site-Assessment Tool are developed.

CONCLUSION

Requirements for Successful DCT Implementation

- Broad adoption of clear, consistent **regulatory guidance**
- Aligned **site and sponsor operational readiness**
- Intentional **workforce development** and training
- Robust **communication frameworks** across clinical and research teams.

Insights from these discussions are directly informing the **development of a DCT site self-assessment tool and a practical playbook** to help community oncology programs evaluate readiness, identify barriers, and operationalize decentralized elements. In addition, **ACORI will continue to foster mentorship and peer-learning opportunities** to support the sharing of real-world best practices and scalable solutions across diverse practice settings.

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DTRA DECENTRALIZED TRIALS & RESEARCH ALLIANCE

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Use the Quick Response (QR) code or visit accc-cancer.org/ACORI to learn more.

AUTHOR CONTACT INFORMATION

Carolyn Trachtenbroit
Program Manager
Association of Cancer Care Centers
ctrachtenbroit@accc-cancer.org

Kristen Kipping-Johnson, MPH
University of Chicago
kkippingjohnson@uchicago.edu

RESULTS

Identified Challenges and Opportunities for DCT Implementation

Regulatory & Oversight Complexity

- Sites and sponsors require **clearer, unified operational guidance** on DCT regulations and adoption strategies.
- Ambiguity persists around **Form 1572 requirements** and local provider oversight responsibilities.
- Expanding access must be carefully **balanced with patient safety** and trial/data integrity.

Operational Infrastructure & Workforce Readiness Gaps

- Key gaps include **sample logistics**, **local lab integration**, and **data workflows.**
- **Investigator confidence** with decentralized models remains a limiting factor.
- **Proactive communication** between primary oncologists and research teams is essential.
- ***Start small:*** pilot a single DCT element before scaling.

Patient-Centered Trial Design

- Accessible trial formats may boost **participation**, **retention**, and **satisfaction**; broader multi-site research is ongoing.
- **Telehealth and digital tools** strengthen decentralized oncology care delivery.
- Fully decentralized **supportive care trials are feasible** within integrated health systems.
- **Virtual engagement models reduce patient burden** and support long-term follow-up.