

Streamlining Clinical Trial Matching by Developing a Trial Navigation Tool

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1. Background

Matching patients to appropriate clinical trials is a challenge in oncology for a variety of reasons, including complex trial databases. Previous methods were manual, time-consuming and relied on protocol trees. Additionally, with trials spanning multiple disease study groups, stages, and treatment decision points, physicians needed a more efficient way to filter and access trial information based on specific characteristics.

2. Goals

- Develop a user-friendly app to assist physicians and clinical trial staff in recommending clinical trials to patients
- Centralize clinical trials in a searchable database that is able to be filtered, updated, and accessed easily

3. Solutions and Methods

To implement this database, we collaborated with clinical trial staff from each disease study group to ensure that the information being inserted was current and accurate. Other important resources included web links to the Rutgers Cancer Institute and ClinicalTrials.gov (CTGOV).

This information was compiled in a Google Sheets database that was connected to AppSheet, a no-code application platform that created an interactive front-end interface. The columns in the spreadsheet are the following: trial number, simple title, detailed title, disease study group, diagnosis, stage, decision point, genomics, notes, sites offered, principal investigator, contact information, Rutgers website link, surgical oncology, radiation oncology, medical oncology, and CTGOV link. AppSheet allows the user to sort the data by choosing specific fields, such as diagnosis, disease study group, principal investigator, scope, and sites offered. Within the disease study group tab, the data is further sorted by diagnosis, stage, and decision point to categorize the data more specifically.

4. Outcomes

The app was deployed in January 2026, and the intended outcomes are to increase knowledge of the protocols efficiency between patient and trial, and subsequently, increase patient enrollment in trials. Some important metrics to compare before and after implementation are number of patients prescreened, number of patients referred to sites where trials are offered, which ultimately lead to increased enrollment numbers.

5. Lessons Learned and Future Directions

Category: Emerging Technology – Work in progress

Running many clinical trials simultaneously requires organization so that clinical trials staff and physicians can easily access them. Having standardized documentation and centralized data also reduces confusion and improves overall efficiency. In the future, the dashboard could include additional features of clinical trials, new ways to sort, or a comprehensive analytics page to show patterns. A patient-facing app could also be developed to better inform the public about available clinical trials.