

Development of a Statewide Cancer Research Network Using Innovation Diffusion Strategies

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Background

Low enrollment of adults in cancer clinical trials is a problem cited frequently in medical literature¹.

Participation in clinical trials is associated with excellent medical care as well as improving the standard of care through research².

Georgia is characterized by a higher incidence of cancer and historically fewer clinical trials than neighboring states³.

The majority of cancer care in Georgia is provided in geographically disbursed, unlinked community practices that serve sizable rural and minority populations⁴.

Centralized network models provide an effective approach to expanding clinical research programs⁵.

Georgia CORE's research network was deemed an innovation due to its unique, statewide model.

Goal

To achieve its goal of enhancing the quality of cancer care through clinical research, Georgia CORE envisioned a network which would increase oncologists' participation in research and broaden access to clinical trials for cancer patients.

Methods

Reliance on innovation diffusion strategies was determined to be an asset in the creation and development of the statewide research network.

Based on a precedence of slow adoption of healthcare innovations, combined with the organization's limited time and resources, strategies of innovation diffusion were incorporated into Georgia CORE's plan for network development⁶.

Innovation diffusion strategies are grouped into three clusters of influence known to affect pace of adoption⁷.

Conclusions

Georgia CORE has utilized strategies known to affect the pace of adoption of innovations in healthcare in the development of a unique, multidisciplinary research network. A collaborative structure that engages oncologists has resulted in the expansion of research sites across the state and greater access to clinical trials for Georgians with cancer.

Statewide Cancer Research Network

Aims

Expand access to clinical trials

Promote research-driven improvements in oncology care

Design and conduct clinical trials

Use technology to exchange information and improve research efficiency

Programs

Public database of all clinical trials with investigator profiles
www.GeorgiaCancerTrials.org

Multi-disciplinary disease specific working groups, E tumor boards, webcasts, and podcasts

Single point-of-entry for multi-site Gynecologic Oncology Group, industry and investigator-initiated trials

Web-based Investigators' Exchange for protocol review, study management

Innovation Diffusion Strategies for Network Development

Phase I 2003-2005 Demonstrating the Value of Innovation

Founding Board of Directors

15 leading oncologists and researchers
60% community oncologists: 33% outside greater Atlanta
40% academic faculty affiliated with all four medical schools

Start Up Funding

Georgia Cancer Coalition

Clinical Trials

82 adult trials in breast, lung, colorectal and prostate cancers
IOM reports less than 2% statewide accrual

Research Network

46 community oncologists, 7 practices, 6 cities

Web Sites

GeorgiaCancerTrials.org, clinical trials database introduced
Electronic scientific review process developed

Phase II 2006 - 2009 Encouraging Adoption of Innovation

Expanded Board of Directors

18 leading oncologists and researchers
61% community oncologists: 39% outside greater Atlanta
39% academic faculty affiliated with all four medical schools

Continuation Funding

Georgia Cancer Coalition, Emory Winship Cancer Institute, GASCO, grants, contracts and sponsorships

Clinical Trials

67% increase in adult trials in breast, lung colorectal and prostate cancers (N = 137); 440 total cancer trials
Commission on Cancer accredited centers report 12% accrual

Research Network

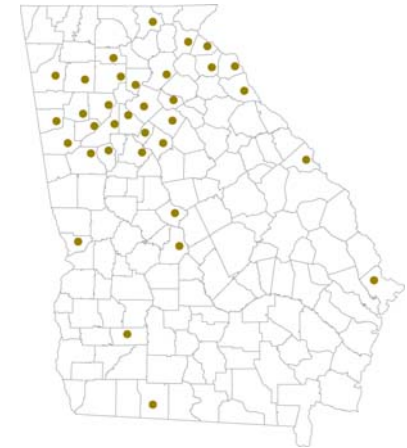
404% growth; 186 oncologists, 57 research sites, 26 cities
Multi-site trials: Gynecologic Oncology Group Membership Printed and E directory of Georgia oncologists
Disease specific work groups, E updates, Web/podcasts

Phase III 2010 Forward Disseminating Innovation

Strategic Plan Development
Summit to Establish Cancer Research Agenda
E Tumor Boards, Educational Conferences
Survey to Measure Patients' Participation in Clinical Trials in Georgia

Results

Multi-Disciplinary Statewide Research Network 186 Oncologists, 57 Research Sites, 26 Cities



References

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