

Clinical Trials in the Modern World

Clinical trials provide significant value to Australia's healthcare system nationally, at an institutional level and at the level of private practice: such value extends beyond the financial to many other areas.



The strategic plans of many institutions encapsulate elements of the quality healthcare they wish to provide for their populations. An analysis of 12 of these strategic plans from 12 Victorian institutions was undertaken and five common elements were identified. This paper highlights how these align to the wider valued offered by Clinical Trials.



Equity of access: Our research population

Patients have the right to be part of a clinical trial as a part of their broader health care^{1 2}. Extending participation to all patients ensures better representation of the real world in the research population: involvement of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities³ and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities is especially important. Such representative research is also highly valued by research organisations, researchers and consumers alike⁴.

Equity of access: Rural and regional

Clinical trials can provide direct benefits to patients including equitable access to treatments, and other aspects of clinical care.⁵ This is especially important in rural and regional areas. Access to clinical trials is a major reason for patient's willingness to participate⁶, yet the vast majority of patients continue to travel to metro sites for treatment, negating some of this advantage. New trial methodologies including registry trials and teletrials can also bridge this gap.

Community Health

Benefits of taking part in clinical trials for patients include improved outcomes and additional Quality Adjusted Life Years (QALY)⁷. Improved standard of care can be considered an advantage to both the patient and the sector with multiplier effects from a healthier population able to enjoy their productive life. Furthermore, by taking part in clinical trials, a community better understands clinical research and relationships with clinicians and researchers are improved and strengthened¹, leading to an expedited translation of clinical practice.

Collaboration and Partnerships

Clinical trials facilitate collaboration and partnerships through increased institutional reputation and profile building, positively influencing the support that the institution receives. An institution that conducts trials adds to the narrative of being cutting edge/dynamic and a leader in up to date high quality care, able to provide care for patients with otherwise unmet needs. An increased reputation can also help an institution gain funding from bodies such as the Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF).

Educated Workforce

Vital to any institution's sustainability is a happy and stable workforce. When highly regarded for conducting research, there is an additional benefit of attracting and retaining higher skilled staff^{5 7} and those who want to embed research in their career path.

Best Quality Patient Care

Clinical trials provide better care not only to those on trials, but to all patients at the institution that conduct those trials^{5 8 9 10}. This is demonstrated through raising standards of treatment, providing best practice patient care¹¹, access to new treatments and technologies and having a workforce open to change and collaboration resulting in expert staff.

¹ [The-value-of-CCI-report-v2.pdf \(healthtranslationsa.org.au\)](#)

² [Declaration of Alma Ata](#)

³ [Statement on consumer and community involvement in health and medical research | NHMRC](#)

⁴ [ACTA Consumer-Involvement Consultation-Report_final_050719.pdf \(clinicaltrialsalliance.org.au\)](#)

⁵ [How may clinical research improve healthcare outcomes? - ScienceDirect](#)

⁶ [The Patient Perspective on Clinical Trials \(appliedclinicaltrialsonline.com\)](#)

⁷ [MTPConnect Australia's Clinical Trials Sector report 2021.pdf](#)

⁸ [Better Outcomes for Patients Treated at Hospitals That Participate in Clinical Trials | Acute Coronary Syndromes | JAMA Internal Medicine | JAMA Network](#)

⁹ [The impact of the process of clinical research on health service outcomes - ScienceDirect](#)

¹⁰ Downing et al [High hospital research participation and improved colorectal cancer survival outcomes: a population based study](#)

¹¹ [What is a clinical trial? | Australian Clinical Trials](#)