NIH NATIONAL CANCER INSTITUTE

Digital Toolkit

NCI-Designated Cancer Centers Communications Toolkit

What is The NCI Cancer Center Program?

The NCI Cancer Centers Program was created as part of the National Cancer Act of 1971 and is one of the anchors of the nation's cancer research effort. Through this program, NCI recognizes centers around the country that meet rigorous standards for transdisciplinary, state-of-the-art research focused on developing new and better approaches to preventing, diagnosing, and treating cancer.

How to use this toolkit?

You are welcome to use the sample messages we have provided, but you know your audience best, so please feel free to edit or craft your own message that appropriately highlights the importance of being an NCI-Designated Cancer Center.

Social Media Tips and Tricks:

- Please use the hashtag **#WeAreNCIDesignated** for posts related to this campaign.
- For Twitter messages, we recommend:
    - Keeping character counts under 280
    - No more than 2-3 hashtags per tweet
    - Using the campaign hashtag in all Twitter posts.

This toolkit contains social media messages, graphics, additional key messages, and FAQs to share with your audiences about the importance of NCI-Designated Cancer Centers and what it could mean for patients seeking care and the scientists looking for research opportunities.

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Main NCI accounts to follow and engage with:

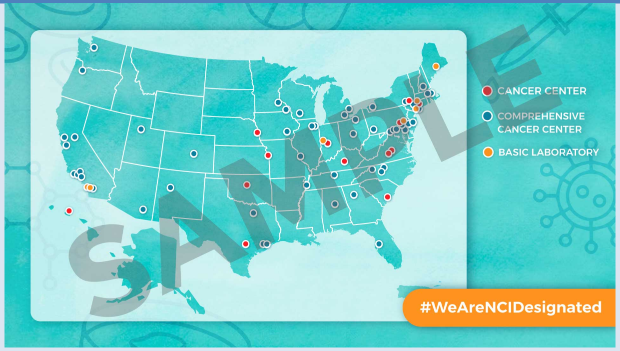
Twitter:

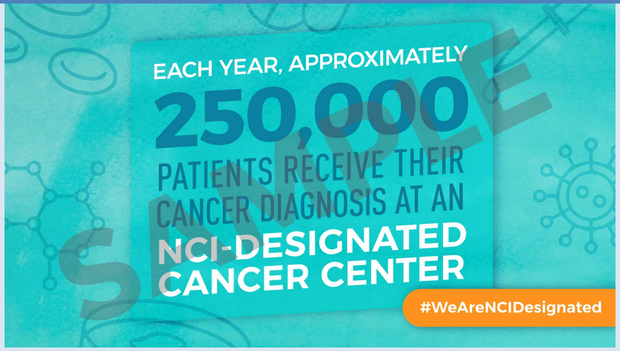
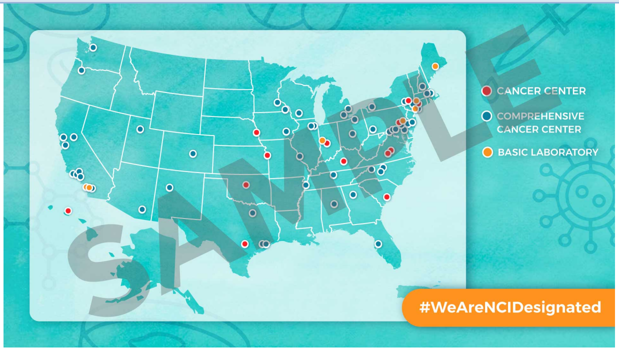
- @theNCI (https://twitter.com/theNCI)
- @NCIDirector (https://twitter.com/NCIDirector)

Facebook (https://www.facebook.com/cancer.gov)

LinkedIn (https://www.linkedin.com/company/nationalcancerinstitute)

Instagram: @nationalcancerinstitute

What it Means to be an NCI-Designated Cancer Center?	
Audience: Patients and Consumers There are currently 71 NCI-Designated Cancer Centers located in over 30 states and Washington, D.C. that deliver cutting-edge cancer treatments to patients. Find a location near you: **https://www.cancer.gov/research/nci-role/cancer-centers/find** #WeAreNCIDesignated	 VOL link to graphic: https://visualsonline.cancer.gov/details.cfm?imageid=12302
Audience: Researchers and Clinical Trialists NCI-Designated Cancer Centers meet rigorous standards for state-of-the-art research programs focused on developing new and better approaches in cancer prevention, diagnosis, and treatment. Learn more about cancer [select "prevention," "diagnosis," or "treatment" to appropriately correspond to the specific link, listed below, that you plan use in your message]: #WeAreNCIDesignated **https://www.cancer.gov/research/areas/prevention** **https://www.cancer.gov/research/areas/diagnosis** **https://www.cancer.gov/research/areas/treatment**	 VOL link to graphic: https://visualsonline.cancer.gov/details.cfm?imageid=12304

What is the Impact of NCI-Designated Cancer Centers?	
Audience: Patients and Consumers Each year, approximately 250,000 patients receive their cancer diagnosis at an NCI-Designated Cancer Center. Learn more: **https://www.cancer.gov/research/nci-role/cancer-centers** #WeAreNCIDesignated	 VOL link to graphic: https://visualsonline.cancer.gov/details.cfm?imageid=12301
Audience: Researchers and Clinical Trialists An even larger number of patients are treated for cancer at these centers each year, and thousands of patients are enrolled in cancer clinical trials at NCI-Designated Cancer Centers. Learn more: **https://www.cancer.gov/research/nci-role/cancer-centers** #WeAreNCIDesignated	 VOL link to graphic: https://visualsonline.cancer.gov/details.cfm?imageid=12302

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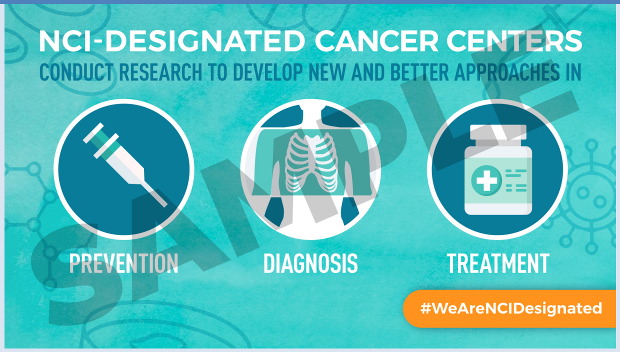
What is the Value of the NCI-Designated Cancer Center Program?	
Audience: Researchers and Clinical Trialists NCI-Designated Cancer Centers have helped pioneer and contribute substantially to the increase in the number of cancer survivors in the United States. Learn more: https://www.cancer.gov/research/progress/annual-report-nation #WeAreNCIDesignated	 VOL link to graphic: https://visualsonline.cancer.gov/details.cfm?imageid=12304
Audience: Researchers and Clinical Trialists Our Cancer Center is recognized for its leadership in laboratory and clinical research, in addition to serving our communities and the broader public by integrating training into its mission. Resources for trainees available: **https://www.cancer.gov/grants-training/training/resources-trainees** #WeAreNCIDesignated	 VOL link to graphic: https://visualsonline.cancer.gov/details.cfm?imageid=12303

Sample Social Media Swiss Cheese Messaging
We are proud to be part of the @theNCI Cancer Centers Program. Here at [insert Twitter handle], we collaborate on hundreds of research studies, ranging from basic laboratory research to clinical assessments of new treatments. #WeAreNCIDesignated [Insert NCI link or your Cancer Center link]
What does it mean to be an NCI-Designated Cancer Center? It's investment in discoveries, leaders in research, and a state-of-the-art approach to cancer prevention and diagnosis, and treatment. #WeAreNCIDesignated [Insert NCI link or your Cancer Center link]
At [insert Twitter handle], we: • achieve leadership in research through the use of any and all viable treatments to improve the quality of the patient's lives. #WeAreNCIDesignated [Insert NCI link or your Cancer Center link] • recognize scientific leadership and resources. #WeAreNCIDesignated [Insert NCI link or your Cancer Center link] • contribute substantially to the increase in the number of cancer survivors in the United States. #WeAreNCIDesignated [Insert NCI link or your Cancer Center link]

Social Media Images: NCI Visuals Online

Please visit NCI Visuals Online to download images related to the NCI-Designated Cancer Centers Program.

The Value of the NCI Cancer Center Program: Impact

Audience: Patients/Consumers

Nationwide Reach, Local Impact

- Of these 71 NCI-Designated Cancer Centers, 53 are designated Comprehensive Cancer Centers, 11 Cancer Centers, and 7 Basic Laboratory Cancer Centers.
  - Comprehensive Cancer Centers are recognized for these same qualities, in addition to demonstrating a depth and breadth of research in all three areas of basic, clinical, and population science.
  - Basic Laboratory Cancer Centers are primarily focused on laboratory research and often conduct preclinical translation while working collaboratively with other institutions to apply these laboratory findings to new and better treatments.
  - Cancer Centers are recognized for their scientific leadership, resources, and the depth and breadth of their research in basic, clinical, and/or prevention, cancer control, and population science.
- Cancer Centers serve their local communities with programs and services tailored to their unique needs and populations.
  - As a result, these centers disseminate evidence-based findings into communities that can directly benefit and use their experience of working with those patients to help inform national research and treatment priorities.
- In addition to the 71 NCI-Designated Cancer Centers, the National Clinical Trials Network (NCTN) and the NCI Community Oncology Research Program (NCORP), serve as significant components of NCI’s research infrastructure. Combined, these programs provide opportunities for every patient across the country to participate in cutting-edge research, not just those with easy access to an NCI-Designated Cancer Center.

The Value of the NCI Cancer Center Program: Investment and Leadership

Audience: Researchers/Clinical Trialists

Investment in Discoveries

- NCI supports the research infrastructure for cancer centers to advance scientific goals, and foster cancer programs that draw investigators from different disciplines together.
- NCI provides significant support to cancer center investigators. Research proposals from cancer center investigators account for about three-quarters of NCI’s extramural budget.

Leader in Research

- The increase in the number of cancer survivors in the United States is achieved using any and all viable treatments to not only give the best chance for survivorship but to improve the quality of the patient’s lives.

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Frequently Asked Questions: CCSG Award Press Releases

1. **When can we announce the award/renewal?**
   A grantee institution may publicize a CCSG award/renewal after the notice of award (NOA) letter has been received.

2. **How can we use the NCI cancer center logo?**
   The guidelines for NCI Comprehensive Cancer Center and Cancer Center logo use can be found on the Office of Cancer Centers website here: https://cancercenters.cancer.gov/PoliciesResources/LogoUsagePolicy

3. **What should we say about our Cancer Center's designation and/or rating?**
   The NCI, as a branch of the federal government, cannot endorse a grantee institution. Therefore, phrases like "stamp of approval" or "seal of approval" should not be used to explain the NCI-designation. Also phrases such as "rated excellent by the NCI" or "received the highest possible rating from NCI" should not be used.

   We recommend: The NCI rated the [NAME] Cancer Center's application as "outstanding, excellent, etc."

4. **How can our consortium partners refer to NCI-Designation status?**
   An NCI approved consortium partner can use the NCI designated Cancer Center (or Comprehensive Cancer Center) identity badge only in concurrence with the official institution logo of their NCI-Designated partner, or if they include text that attributes credit to that partner institution.

   When broadly referring to consortium partners, we recommend: [NCI approved consortium institution name] is an NCI-approved research consortium partner of [partner institution], an NCI-Designated (Comprehensive) Cancer Center.

Frequently Asked Questions: NCORP and NCTN

1. **What is NCORP?**

   The NCI Community Oncology Research Program (NCORP) is a national network that conducts clinical trials and cancer care delivery research, bringing cutting edge cancer research into the communities where patients are being served.

   The NCORP network provides access to the latest cancer research by designing and conducting clinical trials in community oncology settings in the areas of cancer prevention, supportive care and symptom management, screening, and surveillance.

   For additional information on NCORP, please visit https://ncorp.cancer.gov/.

2. **Who are typically NCORP members?**

   NCORP is comprised of 7 Research Bases and 46 Community Sites, 14 of which are designated as Minority/Underserved Community Sites (MU). The Sites are consortia of researchers, public hospitals, physician practices, academic medical centers, and other groups that provide healthcare services in communities across the U.S. NCORP MU Community Sites have a patient population comprised of at least 30% racial/ethnic minorities or rural residents.

3. **What type of clinical trials are done in the NCORP program?**

   The NCORP network designs and conducts clinical trials in cancer prevention, screening, supportive care and symptom management, surveillance, health-related quality of life and cancer care delivery. NCORPs also participate in NCTN treatment and imaging trials.

4. **Does one need to be an NCORP grantee to participate in NCORP clinical trials?**

   In general, participation in NCORP clinical trials is not restricted to only NCORP grantees except for cancer care delivery research studies which are only available to NCORP grantees. Each NCORP trial provides a list of sites who are eligible for participation. Cancer control and prevention trials can be accessed through non-NCORP institution's' membership and affiliations with NCTN Groups.

5. **What is NCTN?**

   NCI's National Clinical Trials Network (NCTN) is a collection of 6 networks and hundreds of clinicians that coordinate and support cancer clinical trials at more than 2,200 sites across the United States, Canada, and internationally. NCTN clinical trials help to establish new standards of care, set the stage for approval of new therapies by the Food and Drug Administration, test new treatment approaches, and validate new biomarkers.

6. **What are the 6 networks that make up NCTCN?**
   The NCTN consists of four adult groups and one group focused solely on childhood cancers. The structure also includes a Canadian Collaborating Clinical Trials Network. The five US Network Groups are the Alliance for Clinical Trials in Oncology, ECOG-ACRIN Cancer Research Group, NRG Oncology, SWOG, Children's Oncology Group (COG) and the Canadian Cancer Trials Group (CCTG).

7. **What are 'LAPS' and what is the difference between Lead Academic Participating Sites (LAPS) and Community Hospitals and Medical Centers?**
   'LAPS' stands for Lead Academic Participating Sites a grant that was awarded to 32 academic institutions and was created specifically as a funding source for NCTN. The sites are academic research institutions with fellowship training programs, and most of the awardees are NCI-Designated Cancer Centers. To receive these awards, sites had to demonstrate their ability to enroll high numbers of patients onto NCTN trials, as well as scientific leadership in the design and conduct of clinical trials.

   LAPS sites are academic research institutions with fellowship training programs, and most of the awardees are NCI-Designated Cancer Centers. To receive these awards, sites had to demonstrate their ability to enroll high numbers of patients onto NCTN trials, as well as scientific leadership in the design and conduct of clinical trials.

   Investigators at community hospitals and medical centers can participate in NCTN trials, even if they are at sites that did not receive a LAPS award. These sites, as well as a number of international sites, either receive research reimbursement directly from one of the network groups with which they are affiliated or they receive awards from the NCI Community Oncology Research Program (NCORP).

8. **Are NCORP sites or NCTN members NCI designated Cancer Centers?**
   Not always. While many of our designated cancer centers are part of the NCORP and NCTN clinical trial networks, not all NCORP and NCTN members are designated cancer centers. Being a part of these programs simply means they have received a grant from the National Cancer Institute (NCI) to conduct clinical trials.

9. **Do NCORP and NCTN sites give patients special access to clinical trials in their region they might not have had otherwise?**
   NCORP and NCTN are not the only ways patients can access clinical trials, although these programs do make it easier for patients in underserved communities to enroll in clinical trials they or their physician may not have known about otherwise. Patients can learn more about clinical trials and how to ask their providers about participation by visiting cancer.gov/about-cancer/treatment/clinical-trials or calling 1-800-4-CANCER.

10. **Why aren't more people enrolling in clinical trials?**
    There are several barriers to participation for patients:

- Restrictive eligibility criteria
- Patients may have comorbidities—other medical conditions—that may make it difficult for them to tolerate therapy.
- Clinicians may not offer a clinical trial to a patient based on assumptions about the patient
- Competing responsibilities, e.g.,time or financial may limit clinical trial participation.

Over the past several years, NCI has made efforts to address the issue of trial eligibility by working to broaden the criteria for some NCI-funded trials. For example, researchers are encouraged to relax the use of upper age limits in adult trials and allow people with cancer who are HIV+ to enroll in trials, as appropriate.

NCI encourages health care providers to question these assumptions. We believe that clinicians should present the option to participate in clinical trials to their patients so that they can make informed decisions about trial participation together. Clinicians should not make this decision for their patients.

Educating and raising clinicians' awareness are essential to promoting clinical trial enrollment. To this end, NCI and many other organizations provide educational opportunities to enhance clinicians' understanding of clinical trials and patient enrollment. It is important that health care providers be aware of available clinical trials and talk to their patients when a clinical trial might be an appropriate option for them.

11. **What if a patient does not have access to an NCTN or NCORP site? Can they still participate in or gain access to NCI clinical trials?**
    Yes. Patients can learn more about clinical trials and how to ask their providers about participation by visiting cancer.gov/about-cancer/treatment/clinical-trials or calling 1-800-4-CANCER.

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Resources from the NCI

The Cancer Information Service (CIS) is NCI’s contact center. CIS is a free, confidential, and compassionate service that provides evidence-based information and support to patients, their family members and friends, cancer researchers, physicians and other health professionals, and the public, in both English and Spanish by phone, online chat, email, and social media.

CIS is available to provide information and resources about:

- Cancer prevention, risk, and screening
- Treatment
- Coping and supportive care
- Clinical trials
- Smoking cessation
- And more

CIS information specialists are available to help in English and Spanish from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. ET
Monday through Friday by:

- Phone: 1-800-4-CANCER (1-800-422-6237)
- LiveHelp Online Chat: cancer.gov/contact
- Email: NCIinfo@nih.gov
- Social Media: cancer.gov/social-media

The CIS can help you help your patients! NCI invites you to share this information with your patients, on social media or link to the CIS on your website.

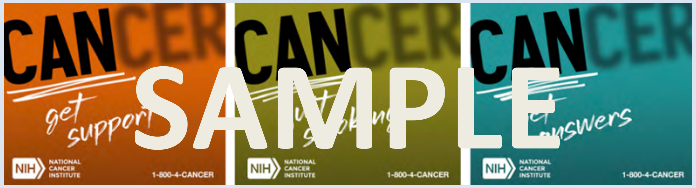
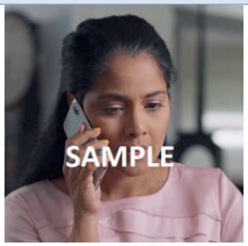
Suggested Social Media Messages from CIS

Facebook

- Cancer can be overwhelming. NCI's trained cancer information specialists can help answer questions you and your family may have about diagnosis, treatment and side effects. Call 1-800-4-CANCER or connect at https://go.usa.gov/xmHzX
- When you need cancer information you can trust, contact NCI’s Cancer Information Service (CIS) at 1-800-4-CANCER or follow the link to chat or send an email: https://go.usa.gov/xmHzX
- Do you have questions about cancer? NCI’s Cancer Information Service provides clear and reliable information on a range of topics in English and Spanish: Reach CIS by phone, 1-800-4-CANCER, email or chat: https://go.usa.gov/xmHzX

Twitter

- Cancer is complicated. @theNCI's trained cancer information specialists can help answer questions you and your family may have. Contact CIS at 1-800-4-CANCER or visit https://go.usa.gov/xmHzN
- When you need cancer information you can trust, contact NCI’s Cancer Information Service. CIS is available by phone at 1-800-4-CANCER, chat, or email. https://go.usa.gov/xmHzN
- Did you know, @theNCI offers free, personalized, and easy-to-understand information on a range of cancer topics in English and Spanish? Contact CIS for help: https://go.usa.gov/xmHzN

Social and Web Assets	Sample Image and Link to Visuals Online
Social Media Graphics Description: **Download the social media graphics to share with the provided suggested posts on your platforms.** Audience: **General public (get support, quit smoking), Health care providers (get answers)**	 Link to social media graphics to download
15 Second Videos / GIF (5) Description: **Download these promotional videos to either share on your website or on social media.** Audience: **General public**	 Link to videos to download

Resources from the NCI continued...

Physicians Data Query (PDQ)

PDQ is NCI’s comprehensive source of cancer information. Cancer information summaries found on PDQ cover a wide range of topics including drug information summaries, dictionaries of general cancer terms, drug terms, and genetics terms.

PDQ Editorial Boards

- Comprised of experts in cancer-related specialties, the six PDQ Editorial Boards produce and maintain the evidence-based cancer information summaries.

Levels of Evidence

- PDQ cancer information summaries include level-of evidence designations to help readers understand the strength of the evidence supporting the use of specific interventions or approaches.

PDQ content is a key component of the cancer information used in Cancer.gov and our many content syndication partners.

- Content includes:
  - Cancer information summaries (Health Professional and Patient, English and Spanish)
  - Dictionaries (Cancer Terms, Genetic Terms, Drug)
  - Drug information summaries

Other Ways to Get PDQ Information

- Cancer.gov Content Dissemination Program
  - Information about Cancer.gov's content dissemination program, which makes cancer information available in XML format for use in Web sites and in other information products.

PDQ has been translated into Spanish, Japanese, Arabic and Chinese.

It was established by the National Cancer Act of 1971 and is now mandated under the Public Health Service Act of 1996.