



1700 K Street, NW | Suite 740 | Washington, DC 20006  
T 202.293.2856  
[www.agingresearch.org](http://www.agingresearch.org)  
[@Aging\\_Research](https://twitter.com/Aging_Research)

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ClinicalTrials.gov Information Team  
National Library of Medicine  
8600 Rockville Pike  
Bethesda, MD 20894

Dear ClinicalTrials.gov Information Team,

As the leading nonprofit organization dedicated to accelerating research to enhance aging and health through public policy and education, the [Alliance for Aging Research](http://www.agingresearch.org) also serves as a voice of older Americans. We are grateful for the opportunity to bring this important voice to the process with our comments on the National Library of Medicine's (NLM) effort to improve and modernize the ClinicalTrials.gov database.

The Alliance recognizes the invaluable role volunteer clinical trial participants play in advancing lifechanging and lifesaving innovations and breakthroughs. ClinicalTrials.gov continues to serve as the world's largest public clinical research results database and as such, is relied upon by patients, caregivers, researchers and members of the medical and advocacy communities. We applaud the NLM's work to improve the usability and functionality of this vital resource. Below are our recommendations we hope the NLM will take into consideration throughout the modernization effort.

### **Establishment of an Advisory Group**

As members of the National Health Council, we echo their [comments](#), particularly with regards to patient engagement in the modernization of ClinicalTrials.gov. As the NHC recommends, the Alliance also supports the establishment of an advisory group of patients and caregivers. We strongly suggest that this advisory group include older adults who would be able to provide important insights on usability, including ways to address accessibility, such as:

- Design aspects like optimal font, font size, and use of color;
- Health literacy considerations like accessible reading level of language used in summaries, definitions, and descriptions; language that allows users to process the meaning and usefulness of the clinical trial information, to understand the choices/consequences of available clinical trials, and to decide which trials match their needs and preferences;
- Opportunities for instructional tools in various communication formats, such as "explainer" videos that illustrate how to best navigate and use the database; and
- Ways to improve search functionality with additional filters, enhanced navigation, etc.

### **Platform Optimization to Serve both Researchers/Clinicians and Patients**

The Alliance encourages the NLM to consider the National Cancer Institute's Physician Data Query (PDQ) database as a strong example of a resource effectively structured for both medical and patient audiences. All content is provided in a healthcare professional version AND a patient version, as well as in Spanish versions of both, and we encourage the NLM to consider the benefits of creating two, bilingual portals for ClinicalTrials.gov.

### **Conclusion**

We appreciate this opportunity to provide feedback on the importance of inclusion of patients in the modernization of ClinicalTrials.gov and are happy to answer any questions. We would also welcome the opportunity to continue the dialogue and serve as a resource. Please do not hesitate to contact us at [lclarke@agingresearch.org](mailto:lclarke@agingresearch.org) and [smith@agingresearch.org](mailto:smith@agingresearch.org).

Sincerely,

Lindsay Clarke, J.D.  
Vice President of Health Education and Advocacy  
Alliance for Aging Research

Lauren Smith, MBA  
Vice President of Communications  
Alliance for Aging Research