Research Poster Awards 2023

Barwon Health

DEAKIN UNIVERSITY

Adrian Costa Clinical Trial Centre - Helping patients to participate in clinical trials, closer to home

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INTRODUCTION

Participation in clinical trials is linked to improved patient outcomes. Despite this participation in cancer clinical trials in regional areas (1.2% of patients) falls far behind metropolitan rates (6.7%)1. This low trial participation rate may contribute to the already poorer outcomes for patients who are reside in regional/rural areas. The overall life expectancy of an Australian in regional/rural Australia is, on average, 2-5 years less than someone residing in a major city, and outcomes are poorer for diseases where clinical trial access might reasonably be expected to improve outcomes.

OBJECTIVES

To review the first 12 months of the Adrian Costa Clinical Trial Centre (ACCTC) at Barwon Health; and identify the fundamental requirements to developing and growing a regional clinical trials unit for patients to access closer to home.

METHOD

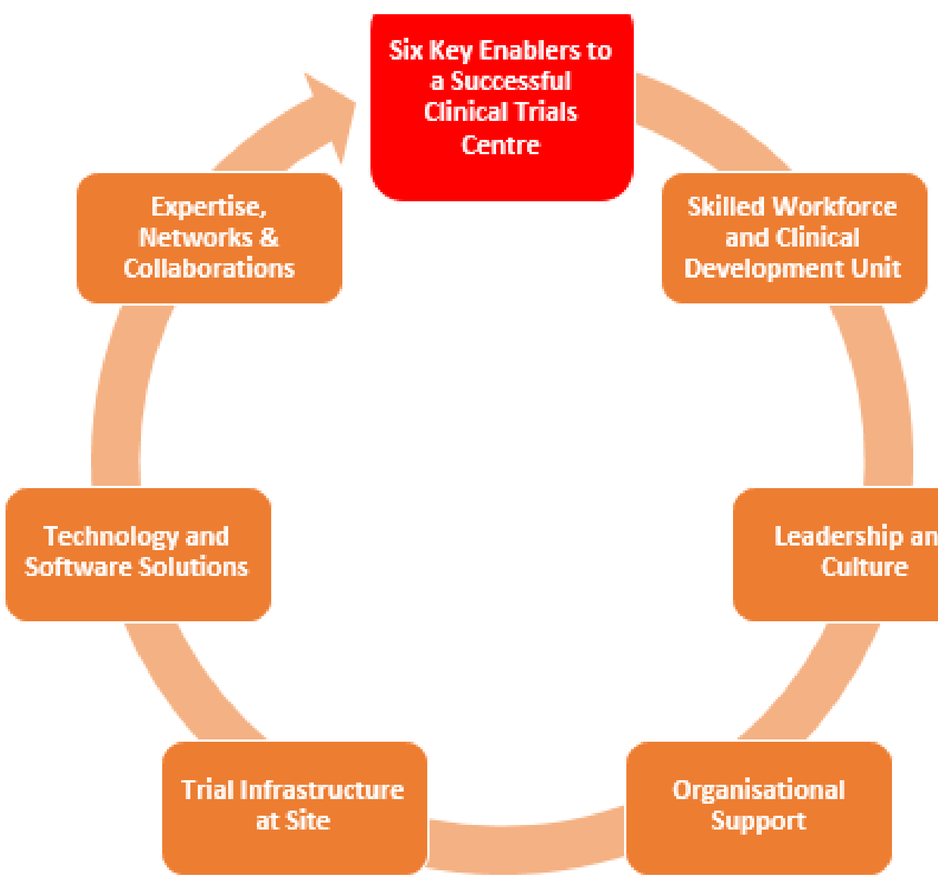
ACCTC was established in September 2022 to improve clinical trial access and participation in communities across South-Western Victoria. It has been a busy 12 months with more trials on offer and more participants receiving care in clinical trials than ever before. ACCTC's researchers and coordinators have:

- leveraged partnerships across our stakeholder groups to ensure a pipeline of work guaranteeing sustainability;
- invested in trial infrastructure to optimise ACCTC's capability platform;
- commenced evaluation of software and technology for future investment to capitalise on capacity, breadth and ACCTC's strategic future directions – teletrials;
- run consumer-facing activities to raise awareness of the importance of research in a learning health service; and
- had a successful assessment to the National Clinical Trials Governance Framework.

In addition, ACCTC's Operations Manager and Quality Officer have consulted widely with each therapeutic area's research teams, industry leaders, peers, other health services, sponsors and government colleagues to assess what are the fundamental requirements for successful public health service clinical trials units which will enable a fit-for-purpose initiative to deliver clinical trials as clinical care, for patients, ensuring they receive treatment close to home.

SIX KEY ENABLERS

Adrian Costa CLINICAL TRIALS CENTRE



RESULTS

ACCTC has achieved success in its first 12 months assimilating 14 clinical areas under a virtual umbrella of standardised systems and processes. Year to date investment from Barwon Health has established the ACCTC with other core research initiatives including a culture of excellence.

Analysis of service provision and benchmarking against successful metropolitan trial units has informed ACCTC in defining six key enablers of thriving clinical trial units. This allows us identify key priorities to enable growth.

Enabler 1 – Skilled workforce and Clinical Development Unit

A clinical development unit to ensure skilled research workforce at all times across: research nurses, trial coordinators, biomedicine researchers, trial managers, research leads and trial pharmacists.

Enabler 2 – Effective Leadership and Culture

Established institutional policies to actively pursue research and clinical trials; strong compliance with NCTGF; dedicated executive with research responsibilities; multisite reviewing HREC; Biosafety Committee and First in Humans trial expertise; reportable metrics.

Enabler 3 – Organisational Support – HR, Finance, Strategy

Expert ethics and governance staff, people and culture recruitment structures, dedicated management accountant, informed directors and executive, suite of strategic, operational and risk management plans.

Enabler 4 – Trial Infrastructure at Site

Dedicated clinical trial centre, onsite pathology, radiology, specialists, inpatient services available, trial pharmacy, storage and archiving capability.

Enabler 5 –Technology and Software Solutions

Networked IT systems with remote access, multisite clinical trial management system (CTMS), e-signature; research office systems with integrated workflows and registers (GCP, Scope of practice, registration and qualifications).

Enabler 6 – Expertise, Networks and Collaborations

Build hub and spoke models of care, clusters for trials, formal partnerships between sites and universities, medical research institute collaborations, integrated health service - clinical school HDR programs, national profile for mentorship, government and professional networks.

REFERENCES

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