

# 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 literature<sup>1</sup>.

Participation in clinical trials is associated with excellent medical care as well as improving the standard of care through research<sup>2</sup>.

Georgia is characterized by a higher incidence of cancer and historically fewer clinical trials than neighboring states<sup>3</sup>.

The majority of cancer care in Georgia is provided in geographically disbursed, unlinked community practices that serve sizable rural and minority populations<sup>4</sup>.

Centralized network models provide an effective approach to expanding clinical research programs<sup>5</sup>.

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 development<sup>6</sup>.

Innovation diffusion strategies are grouped into three clusters of influence known to affect pace of adoption<sup>7</sup>.

## 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](http://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

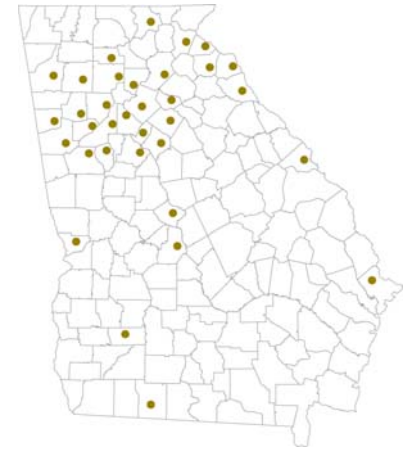
404% growth; 186 oncologists, 57 research sites, 26 cities  
Multi-site trials; Gynecologic Oncology Group Membership Printed and E directory of Georgia oncologists  
Disease specific work groups, E updates, Web/podcasts

### 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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