

2021 Impact Report



Patricia Robinson, MD, is the recipient of a DEI Career Development Award from The Hope Foundation, our first career development grant with a focus on enhancing diversity, equity, and inclusion in SWOG trials.



“We made 2021 a year of action for SWOG’s diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts, hiring a consultant to help chart strategy and provide training toward a more inclusive leadership, rolling out our TeamScience@SWOG Module 6 training, convening a symposium to share success stories in diversifying trial recruitment, establishing a pilot grant program to help write more such stories, awarding our first DEI Career Development Award, recruiting DEI champions to work with our committees, holding a fall plenary on integrity and ethical behavior in cancer research, and crafting a new position for a vice chair to align our DEI and professional integrity initiatives. The Hope Foundation has been our essential partner in these efforts, and these steps are just the beginning.”

Charles D. Blanke, MD

— Charles D. Blanke, MD
SWOG Cancer Research Network Group Chair

Our Data

10
SWOG trials activated

6
SWOG trials closed

35
clinical and translational concepts reviewed by leadership

12
requests for trial data granted

3,404
patients enrolled on all SWOG-run trials, not counting screening registrations

112
journal articles published

54% published in high impact factor journals

76
oral or poster presentations made

41% of presentations were oral



Sumanta “Monty” Pal, MD, published results from S1500 showing that cabozantinib is the most effective of the three treatments the trial tested for metastatic papillary kidney cancer, setting a new standard of care for this rare tumor type.

143 New Member Sites



Our Highlights

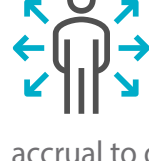


Anne Chiang, MD, PhD



Mariana Chavez Mac Gregor, MD, MSc

We welcomed two new executive officers. Dr. Anne Chiang is now our executive officer for breast and lung cancer research, and we appointed Dr. Mariana Chavez Mac Gregor as our executive officer for international affairs. SWOG has become increasingly international, adding member institutions this year in Chile, Brazil, Uruguay, and Saudi Arabia. We also welcomed Dr. Sapna Patel as new chair of our melanoma committee.



We persevered undaunted in year 2 of the pandemic.

We maintained overall accrual to our trials at close to pre-pandemic levels, adopted more flexible clinical research guidelines that have made our trials more patient centered, and improved the virtual group meeting, with our registration numbers now regularly exceeding those for past in-person group meetings. Despite COVID, we still pursue our mission to significantly improve lives through cancer research.



We saw SWOG Clinical Trials Partnerships come of age. In 2021, SWOG CTP laid the

foundation for a dedicated e-research infrastructure, added significant staff support for key functions, launched a website, and signed its first Preferred Partnership agreement. Several CTP trials are in the design phase and should activate in 2022. In addition, future partnerships are in the works. SWOG CTP is poised to grow exponentially.



We continued to refine our protocol selection and development

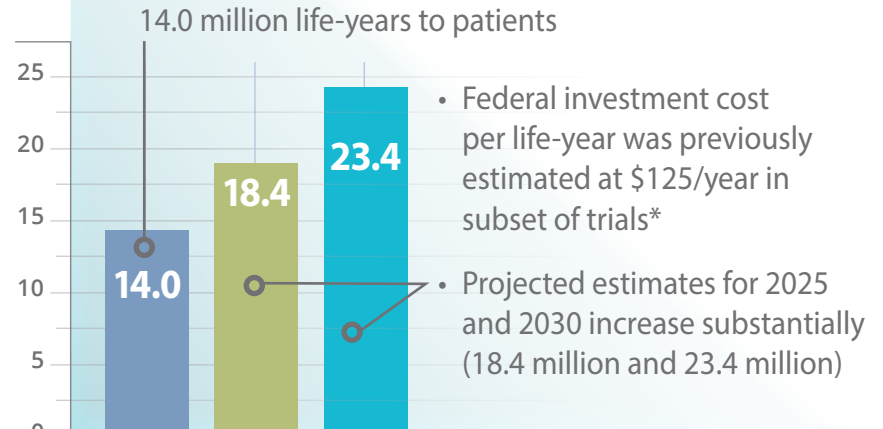
process. We’re implementing task force recommendations that allow us to more equitably and efficiently allocate our statistical and operational resources to developing new trial protocols. These changes make resources available to some of our research support committees in addition to the standard research committees, so they can develop and lead their own clinical trials. As studies have grown more complex, we’ve also contracted with outside firms to supplement our protocol development staffing.

We looked back and found that NCTN groups have saved 14 million+ years of life. During the 50th anniversary of the National Cancer Act, we took time to assess the impact of more than 65 years of public-powered cancer research by the cooperative groups. What did we find? That the NCTN groups have collectively added more than 14 million years to the lives of cancer survivors. And that our results have had enormous influence on subsequent cancer research and cancer care guidelines.

POPULATION IMPACT

POPULATION LIFE YEAR ESTIMATES FOR YEAR 2020 AND PROJECTED ESTIMATES FOR 2025 AND 2030 (MILLIONS)

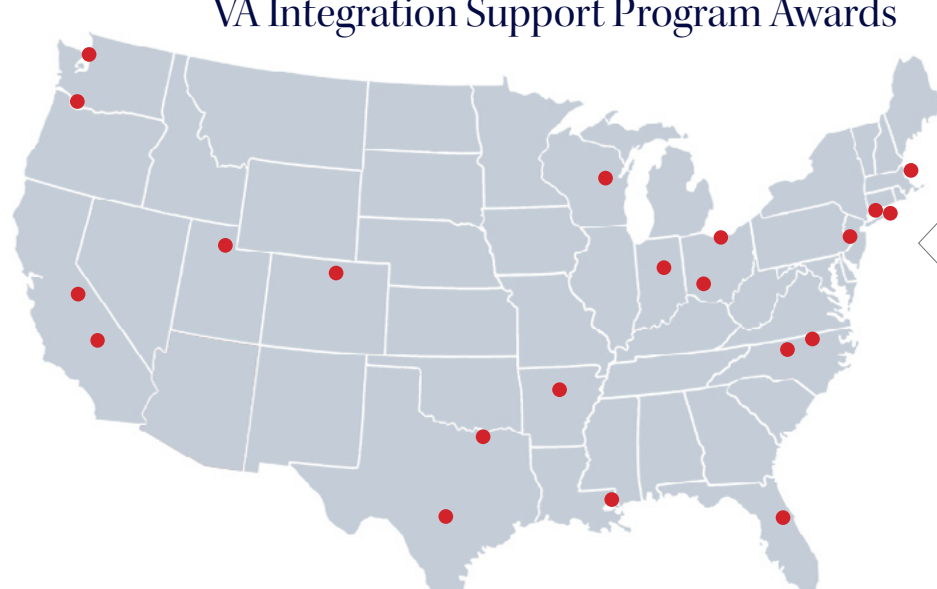
- Overall, 128 trials showed overall survival favoring the experimental arm
- These trials are estimated to have generated gains of 14.0 million life-years to patients



- Federal investment cost per life-year was previously estimated at \$125/year in subset of trials*
- Projected estimates for 2025 and 2030 increase substantially (18.4 million and 23.4 million)

* Unger, LeBlanc, Blanke; JAMA Onc, 2017

VA Integration Support Program Awards



We made our VA working group a permanent committee.

Since 2013, our Veterans Affairs working group has been helping to make NCTN trials available to increasing numbers of veterans across the US. This year we made the group’s efforts a permanent part of SWOG’s research support infrastructure. Among their accomplishments: awarding more than \$650,000 in grants to help VA medical centers open cancer clinical trials to veterans.

THE HOPE FOUNDATION FOR CANCER RESEARCH

Maximizing Value for Improved Outcomes

We were fortunate in 2021 to advance a raft of projects among SWOG’s efforts supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). And while there’s consensus among our teams that DEI is important for our network and its trials, we’re often asked *why* they’re important and *how* we expect to achieve them.

Diverse, equitable, inclusive trials make cancer research better. And our investment in funds to improve trial access is not new. We’ve focused efforts to open studies for adolescent and young adult participants, and to make exclusion criteria less rigid so that older patients can enroll. This year we awarded our twenty-first grant to ensure veterans have access to trials, too. Making care more inclusive means research can proceed more quickly, outcomes can be more generalizable across populations, precision medicine can become more precise.

DEI goals are vital in setting our path in the right and just direction for patients, but we need working systems to make that progress happen. As detailed earlier in this report, we’re helping SWOG achieve inclusive leadership practices through training, and we’re providing additional funding for infrastructure through new grants, fellowships, and support for committee liaisons and working groups. A future vice chair for DEI is coming soon, too. This progress can become operationalized across our network and embedded within the development of its trials going forward.

This year’s accomplishments enhance the work we’ve been doing for years – and it’s reflected here in the pages of this report. Whether funding **career development programs** to support remarkable oncologists like Drs. Pal, Robinson, and Chiang, or launching efforts like the **Latin America Initiative** and **VA Integration Support Program** to expand SWOG’s impact, we’ve seen investments in our members’ visionary thinking pay off in spades. They present us with a need, and we set forth working to meet it for the benefit of patients. We even supported the work which this year announced an incredible **14 million years of human life saved** through NCTN trials! It’s astounding and humbling, and I can think of no better way to prove the value of our mission or say thank you to our donors.

Throughout a year filled with unique healthcare challenges, it is an honor to support the work of our members who are making strides in cancer care with their dedication to improving lives.

Onward and be well,

Johanna R. Horn

Johanna R. Horn
President & CEO

