



NJ ACTS: Responding at Warp Speed to COVID-19

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NIH's Clinical and Translational Science Awards (CTSA) reduce barriers to translational science. The COVID-19 pandemic's need for efficacious treatments and a "warp speed" vaccine challenged CTSA recipients. NJACTS responded to this momentum with one of the largest Health Care Population COVID-19 prospective studies in the US and the second largest recruitment site for the Janssen vaccine trial. Our objective is to identify, compare, and contrast metrics that illustrate the effectiveness of NJACTS's mobilization efforts. Data was collected from the IRB, the Clinical Research Units (CRUs), and the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP). IRB data detailed the volume and types of protocols approved and turnaround time (TAT) for approval in 2020 vs. 2019. CRU data examined study metrics of adult and pediatric clinical trials across 2018-2020. ORSP data documented awards received in 2019 and 2020.

Analysis revealed a 95% increase in IRB-approved studies in 2020, with a 68% decrease in TAT for COVID-19 studies. The NB CRU had a 61% decrease in median time for patient accrual in 2020 vs. 2019; the CRUs' subject enrollment increased 211% and 383% vs. 2019 and 2018; study income was 106% and 196% greater than 2019 and 2018 respectively, with more than half funded through federal sponsors and 89% for COVID-19 trials. ORSP data revealed that 9% of awards and 26% of 2020 funding were COVID-19 studies.

This study demonstrates NJACTS effectively responded to challenges posed by the pandemic, by increasing IRB approval rate, federal support, and participation in trials, including vulnerable populations.

