



National Institutes of Health
National Cancer Institute
Bethesda, Maryland 20892

The Oncology Nursing Society
125 Enterprise Drive
Pittsburgh, PA 15275-1214

Re: ONS Letter dated April 25, 2014 on Community Clinical Trials

Thank you for your letter pointing out the crucial role that community-based clinical oncology research plays in the National Cancer Program. I fully agree. In fact, the importance of community-based clinical trials and care was the motivation behind the amalgamation of the existing NCI community clinical trials programs (the Community Clinical Oncology Program [CCOP]; the Minority-based CCOP [MB-CCOP], and the NCI Community Cancer Centers Program [NCCCP]) into a single coordinated effort, the NCI Community Oncology Research Program (NCORP).

The NCORP is designed to work seamlessly in tandem with the NCI National Clinical Trials Network (NCTN) offering, as always, access to NCI funded clinical trials in community settings, where most cancer patients are treated. In fact, with the launch of NCORP, the spectrum of community-based research will include research on prevention, supportive care, health-related quality of life, comparative effectiveness, cancer care delivery, and cancer health disparities. It is important to point out that additional funding will be provided for this expanded mission.

The CCOP/MB-CCOP is housed in the NCI Division of Cancer Prevention (DCP), which is the future home of NCORP. The staff within NCI dedicated to the launch and conduct of the new NCORP is expanding. The NCORP will be jointly administered by DCP and the Division of Cancer Control and Population Sciences and will collaborate closely with the Division of Cancer Treatment and Diagnosis and the Center to Reduce Cancer Health Disparities.

As you may know, the Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) for NCORP was published in the NIH Guide in November 2013. All proposals have been received and are undergoing review. Awards are due to be made in August 2014. The FOA was an open competition and not restricted by size of community site.

Page 2 – The Oncology Nursing Society

The aim of all these changes is to achieve the very goals that you outline in your letter. It is NCI's vision that NCORP will respond to the rapidly changing health care environment that influences the practice of oncology and will continue to provide access to advances in research within the community setting.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Harold Varmus". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Harold" and last name "Varmus" clearly distinguishable.

Harold Varmus, M.D.

Director

National Cancer Institute