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## VA Portland Health Care System among lead sites in new effort to enroll more Veterans with cancer in clinical trials

**PORTLAND, Oregon** – Veterans with cancer who receive their care at [VA Portland Health Care System](#) (VAPORHCS) will now have more access to the latest treatment options, thanks to a partnership between VA and the [National Cancer Institute \(NCI\)](#).

The NCI and VA Interagency Group to Accelerate Trials Enrollment, or NAVIGATE, is launching at VAPORHCS and 11 other VA sites: Atlanta; the Bronx, New York; Charleston, South Carolina; Denver; Durham, North Carolina; Hines, Illinois; Long Beach, California; Minneapolis; Palo Alto, California; San Antonio; West Haven, Connecticut; and Boston. Boston will also serve as a coordinating center for the effort.

“By increasing enrollment in these trials, VA and Veterans will be contributing to important oncology research,” said Acting VA Secretary Peter O’Rourke. “This will not only help our Veterans, but also advance cancer care for all Americans, and people around the world.”

NAVIGATE will build infrastructure at these VA sites to enable more Veterans to take part in cutting-edge clinical trials sponsored by NCI. Such trials typically test cutting-edge experimental treatments such as precision-medicine therapies based on patients’ genetic profiles, or immunotherapies that harness patients’ own immune systems to bring about cures.

The NAVIGATE network will also establish best practices and share insights to help other VAs nationwide enroll more Veterans in cancer clinical trials. Special attention is being given to minority patients, who often have poorer access to new treatments and are not as well-represented in clinical trials in the U.S.

“We at VAPORHCS are thrilled to be a part of this partnership and provide the latest cutting-edge care to the Veterans we serve,” said Michael W. Fisher, VAPORHCS Director. “Cancer is one of the leading causes of death among Veterans and this joint effort will undoubtedly make a difference.”

While VA has a robust research program—including clinical trials on cancer and other diseases—at more than 100 sites nationwide, VA facilities often face challenges initiating and completing trials, including ones conducted through the NCI National Clinical Trials Network. Local VA research staff, for example, may lack adequate support to handle certain regulatory and administrative tasks involved in these studies. NAVIGATE will help remove those barriers.

NAVIGATE will also seek to enroll Veterans in trials sponsored by NCI’s Community Oncology Research Program that focus on cancer prevention and symptom management.

“This cooperative grant funding mechanism between the VA and NCI provides an opportunity for our Veterans to benefit from the latest emerging technologies in the life sciences that will offer the promise of better lives for our cancer patients.” Said Mark Garzotto, M.D. Staff Urologist, VAPORHCS and Professor of Urology, Oregon Health & Science University.

VA’s involvement in NAVIGATE is being managed through the [Cooperative Studies Program](#), part of [VA’s Office of Research and Development](#). CSP has a long history of running impactful clinical trials focused on Veterans’ health needs. To learn more about CSP and VA Research overall, visit [www.research.va.gov](http://www.research.va.gov).

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*[VA Portland Health Care System \(VAPORHCS\)](#) serves more than 95,000 Veterans in Oregon and Southwest Washington. VAPORHCS consists of the main tertiary care medical center located in Portland, Ore., the Vancouver Campus located in Vancouver, Wash., a Community Resource and Referral Center (CRRC) in Portland, as well as nine community outpatient clinics across Oregon that support our Veterans. These clinics are located in Bend, Fairview, Hillsboro, Warrenton, Newport, Salem, The Dalles, West Linn, and Lincoln City, Oregon.*



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