Clinical trials are research studies that test medical, surgical or behavioral interventions in people. They are essential to advancing medical innovation and to ensuring that safe and effective treatments move out of the laboratory to the patients who need them. Participating in clinical trials can offer hope for people affected by disease as well as the chance to help find better treatments for others in the future. The National Institutes of Health conducts clinical trials at its Clinical Center in Bethesda, MD, and supports clinical trial research in every US state.

Clinical trials are often highly collaborative, bringing together industry, the NIH and other government agencies, academic medical centers and research institutions, community providers, patients and disease advocacy organizations. Any of these entities can sponsor a study, meaning that they initiate and have authority over the study. The study funder may be its sponsor or another collaborator.

To learn about clinical trials near you, visit ClinicalTrials.gov.