ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION
No. 227

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MAY 12, 2021

Sponsored by:
Assemblyman RONALD S. DANCER
District 12 (Burlington, Middlesex, Monmouth and Ocean)

SYNOPSIS

Designates third full week of May of each year as "Clinical Trials Awareness Week" and May 20 of each year as "Clinical Trials Volunteers Appreciation Day" in NJ.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.

A JOINT RESOLUTION designating the third full week of May of each year as "Clinical Trials Awareness Week" in New Jersey and designating May 20 of each year as "Clinical Trials Volunteers Appreciation Day" in New Jersey.

WHEREAS, The National Institutes of Health defines a clinical trial as a research study in which one or more human subjects are prospectively assigned to one or more interventions to evaluate the effects of those interventions on health-related biomedical or behavioral outcomes; and

WHEREAS, Today, clinical trials are an essential element of medical research and an important step in discovering new treatments for cancer and other diseases, as well as new ways to detect, diagnose, and reduce the risk of disease; and

WHEREAS, On May 20, 1747, aboard the HMS Salisbury, a British naval surgeon, James Lind, started what is widely considered to be the first randomized clinical trial when he recruited 12 seamen to compare the effects of citrus fruits on patients with scurvy against five alternative remedies; and

WHEREAS, James Lind's recommendation that fresh citrus fruit and lemon juice be included in the diet of seamen eventually resulted in the eradication of scurvy from the British Navy; and

WHEREAS, James Lind's rudimentary clinical trial became the precursor to modern clinical trials that provide rigorous scientific review of new drugs and other interventions that instill confidence that they are safe and effective for general use; and

WHEREAS, It was a randomized clinical trial of the Salk polio vaccine in over 600,000 school children that led to the approval of the first preventive treatment and eventual eradication of that disease; and

WHEREAS, Without clinical trials, diseases such as polio and measles would still be a danger to people today; and

WHEREAS, Both the Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey and Cooper Research Institute conduct a wide variety of clinical trials to provide the most cutting edge treatment options for patients; and

WHEREAS, As one of the National Cancer Institute's designated cancer centers, the Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey is able to provide patients with access to clinical trials not available at other hospitals, clinics, or doctor's offices, as well as access to some of the most advanced targeted treatments and medicines available to cancer patients; and

WHEREAS, The Cooper Research Institute provides unprecedented healthcare services to the residents of South Jersey, including conducting 168 clinical trials in 2018; and

WHEREAS, According to the HealthCare Institute of New Jersey, of the 1,120 new cancer drugs currently in development, New Jersey has 357 cancer drugs in development which ranks second, nationally, to California's 388 cancer drugs in development; and

WHEREAS, In New Jersey, pharmaceutical research companies in collaboration with clinical research centers and hospitals have conducted 4,967 clinical trials of new medicines since 2004, including 1,234 in 2013 with the participation of 25,126 selfless New Jersey residents; and

WHEREAS, In 2017, New Jersey hosted 792 clinical trials of drugs and medical treatments and had an estimated total economic impact of $880 million; and

WHEREAS, According to the HealthCare Institute of New Jersey, New Jersey is commonly referred to as the "Medicine Chest of the World" because of the State's long-standing commitment to the life sciences industry; and

WHEREAS, Clinical trials, along with the participation of selfless volunteers, have been critical to the progress made in the fight against COVID-19 and directly aided in the development of several effective and safe COVID-19 vaccines; and

WHEREAS, The State of New Jersey should recognize and celebrate clinical trials to help further public awareness and better understanding of clinical trials and their beneficial use for the people of New Jersey, and to show gratitude for the selfless volunteers; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:*

1. In order to promote awareness and understanding of the important role that clinical trials play in modern medicine, and to show gratitude to the selfless volunteers of clinical trials:

a. The third full week of May of each year is designated as "Clinical Trials Awareness Week" in New Jersey.

b. May 20 of each year is designated as "Clinical Trials Volunteers Appreciation Day" in New Jersey.

2. The Governor is respectfully requested to annually issue a proclamation and call upon public officials and all citizens of this State to observe "Clinical Trials Awareness Week" and "Clinical Trials Volunteers Appreciation Day" with appropriate programs and activities.

3. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This resolution designates the third full week of May of each year as "Clinical Trials Awareness Week" in New Jersey and May 20 of each year as "Clinical Trials Volunteers Appreciation Day" in

New Jersey to promote awareness and understanding of the important role that clinical trials play in modern medicine.

May 20, 1747, is widely recognized as the day that British naval surgeon, James Lind, started the first randomized clinical trial. James Lind recruited 12 seamen to compare the effects of citrus fruits on patients with scurvy against five alternative remedies. His recommendation that fresh citrus fruit and lemon juice be included in the diet of seamen eventually resulted in the eradication of scurvy from the British Navy.

Since James Lind's first randomized clinical trial, clinical trials have improved a great deal. Today, clinical trials are an essential element of medical research and an important step in discovering new treatments for cancer and other diseases, as well as new ways to detect, diagnose, and reduce the risk of disease. Without clinical trials, diseases such as polio and measles would still be a danger to people today.

Both the Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey and Cooper Research Institute conduct a wide variety of clinical trials to provide the most cutting edge treatment options for patients. As one of the National Cancer Institute's designated cancer centers, the Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey is able to provide patients with access to clinical trials not available at other hospitals, clinics, or doctor's offices, as well as access to some of the most advanced, targeted treatments and medicines available to cancer patients. The Cooper Institute, along with the various other Cooper Health System entities, provide unprecedented healthcare services to the residents of South Jersey, including conducting 168 clinical trials in 2018.

According to the HealthCare Institute of New Jersey, of the 1,120 new cancer drugs currently in development, New Jersey has 357 cancer drugs in development which ranks second, nationally, to California's 388 cancer drugs in development. In New Jersey, pharmaceutical research companies in collaboration with clinical research centers and hospitals have conducted 4,967 clinical trials of new medicines since 2004, including 1,234 in 2013 with the participation of 25,126 New Jersey residents. In 2017, New Jersey hosted 792 clinical trials and had an estimated total economic impact of $880 million.

Clinical trials have been critical to the progress made in the fight against COVID-19 and directly aided in the development of several effective and safe COVID-19 vaccines. The selfless volunteers who have participated in these clinical trials have helped scientists develop reliable vaccines against COVID-19, such as the Pfizer and Moderna vaccinations.

The State of New Jersey should recognize and celebrate clinical trials to help further public awareness and better understanding of clinical trials and their beneficial use for the people of New Jersey, and to show gratitude for the selfless volunteers.