

CONTENTS

www.BreastCancerTrials.org

BY PAMELA HARRIS

BreastCancerTrials.org, a nonprofit clinical trial matching service dedicated to breast cancer, launched nationwide in October following a successful pilot program developed by the University of California, San Francisco Center of Excellence for Breast Cancer Care, the National Cancer Institute, and patient advocates.

Patients can search for trials by their type of breast cancer and location. The site also features a matching tool that compares a patient's detailed health history with the eligibility requirements of each trial. This feature creates a personalized list of trials for which the patient is most likely to qualify. Patients can supply their health history on a one-time basis or store it on secure servers for ongoing matching to newly listed trials.

Elly Cohen, PhD, and program director for BreastCancerTrials.org, says the site is "extremely responsible of privacy" and adheres to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). "We use the information only to find a trial," she says.

Additional features are in the works. A message service, for example, will allow you to contact research sites through the website to let them know that you are interested in specific trials. It will also allow you to share your health history with the research sites of your choosing. Also planned is a trial alert system in which you will be automatically notified when a trial has been added that matches your health history.

BreastCancerTrials.org was designed to raise awareness of the importance of clinical trials and to provide an easy, free tool to connect to a trial appropriate for your health situation.

"We want to move the needle so patients considering trials are the norm rather than the exception," says Cohen. Available trials represent all aspects of breast cancer care, including screening and detection, prevention, treatment, and quality of life.

The nationwide launch of BreastCancerTrials.org, which now operates as an independent nonprofit corporation, was backed by a grant from the philanthropic arm of Safeway, Inc.