

INTRODUCING

Decentralized Clinical Trials (DCTs)

Thanks to digital technology we are more connected today than ever before. This digital innovation has changed the way we treat and manage our own health and how we conduct clinical research too.

With a 'decentralized' approach, trials use digital technology to help overcome geographic and other barriers to enable a range of participants to collaborate, directly from the comfort of their own home. This means that, without compromising on rigor or effectiveness, we can ensure the enrollment of a more diverse patient population that is a more closely representative cross-section of people living with the condition.

Traditional vs Decentralized

Participants must travel to a clinic

When you're not well, traveling can be an added burden and may limit involvement or cause participants to drop-out from a clinical trial. It also means that participation might be skewed by proximity to the testing centers.



Rethinking geographical boundaries

Technologies allow people to participate from their own home, thereby lowering the likelihood for geographical biases and encouraging a more diverse participant group.

Supplies are located at the clinic

Access to all trial-related supplies are in the clinic.



Supplies are delivered at home

Participants have all they need for the trial sent directly to their home, including digital technologies to stay connected to their medical team.

Procedures are carried out at a clinic

All trial activities are carried out at the clinic site, meaning appointment reminders and attendance, along with medication reminders, are added burdens for participants.



Procedures are conducted at home

Clinical assessments are conducted from the privacy of people's homes through the digital technologies provided and mobile nurses, enabling results to be taken from a 'real life' setting.

Manually processed in person

All trial activities are carried out at the clinic. All trial documentation such as progress reports, sign offs, consent forms and instructions are signed at the clinic.



Digitally processed through an app

Through a shared app, participants can provide sign offs, pictures, progress reports and reach the medical team – accessible at any time to both the trial center and participants. This potentially allows for real-time data to be recorded.

Putting this approach to work in depression research

Depression can have long lasting effects on mood, motivation and the ability to enjoy activities. Sadly, it is a common illness worldwide and has become one of the leading causes of disability. Living with the condition can also mean that people find it hard to socialize or leave their home. Unfortunately, these challenges can make researching this complex condition even more difficult. By collaborating with patients and investigators we are moving beyond traditional approaches and leveraging new technologies to advance scientific research.

Boehringer Ingelheim is working in partnership with Science37 to develop and run the first ever decentralized clinical trial for depression.