

Oncology Center Of Excellence Formally Launched

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) formally launched its Oncology Center of Excellence through a reorganization of the Office of Medical Products and Tobacco and tapped Richard Pazdur as its director. The move marks the first disease area for which FDA has set up a coordinated clinical review process spanning its drug, biologics and device centers.

The new approach, which FDA hopes will speed development of oncology-related products, offers a possible model for potential future centers covering other disease areas.

"FDA recognizes that oncology is not the only disease area that stands to benefit from a more coordinated agency-wide effort to expedite the development of

safe and effective therapies," the spokesperson said when asked whether other centers might follow. But for now FDA plans to focus on the oncology center, and is still formalizing the new center's structure and implementation, the spokesperson added.

The Oncology Center of Excellence (OCE) will coordinate clinical reviews of oncology drugs, biologics and devices across FDA's three centers, all of which reside within the Office of Medical Products and Tobacco, the FDA spokesperson said.

FDA drug center chief Janet Woodcock said in late December that implementing the new center of excellence, which falls under the umbrella of the Cancer Moonshot Initiative, was among her priorities for 2017.