

CROSS to CRES: The Evolution of a Clinical Research Operations Supplemental Series to an Accredited Clinical Research Education Series

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1. Background

The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in attrition of non-physician research staff, or clinical research professionals (CRPs), across all levels of experience and roles within the 12 oncology research groups in the Abramson Cancer Center (ACC) Clinical Research Unit (CRU). ACC CRU central leadership assessed orienting/onboarding CRPs and determined additional clinical operations (OPS) training was necessary. In May 2021, the Clinical Research Operation Supplemental Series (CROSS) was launched to bridge the gap between the knowledge and experience of orienting/onboarding CRPs, as well as to engage and to provide OPS continuing education for current CRPs working hybrid schedules. The success of CROSS for education and career development for ACC CRU CRPs resulted in the evolution to an accredited education activity for ACC CRU clinical research nurses, coordinators, pharmacists, advanced practice providers, other credentialed CRPs, and physicians.

2. Goals

- Provide OPS educational opportunities for ACC CRU CRPs and ACC CRU physicians relevant to clinical research
- Ensure content relevance by basing CROSS sessions on perceived CRU research needs, issues identified by CRPs, and drawing presenters from ACC CRU physicians and ACC/University of Pennsylvania (Penn) collaborating departments
- Stimulate information-sharing and collaboration among the ACC CRU oncology research groups, ACC CRU physicians, and collaborating with Penn through engagement and participating in CROSS activities
- Continue to improve the knowledge, skills/strategies, and competencies of CRPs, while supplementing preexisting OPS with Quality Assurance (QA), and Regulatory Affairs (RA) research knowledge and skills

3. Solutions and Methods

The ACC CRU central leadership identified the initial CROSS topics and engaged ACC CRU oncology physicians and Penn collaborating department (e.g., pharmacy, fertility preservation, radiology) subject matter experts (SMEs). Accreditation of CROSS was acquired in recognition of the continuing education and career development opportunities for CRPs and to stimulate physician SMEs' interest in presenting CROSS educational sessions. Presentations were recorded to support future learning opportunities for CRPs and orienting/on-boarding training for CRPs.

4. Outcomes


- Attendee direct feedback from initial CROSS sessions inspired future topics and encouraged physician SMEs to provide educational sessions ("Jehovah's Witnesses—The Medical and Ethical Challenge in Clinical Research," "Hallmarks of Cancer," and "Immune Toxicities")
- Approximate attendance of the CROSS sessions averaged 50-80 of the 140 ACC CRU CRPs and physicians
- The increasing intersection of OPS, QA, and RA research landscapes in the ACC CRU necessitated

CROSS's incorporation of an existing RA education series in January 2023—CROSS became the accredited Clinical Research Education Series (CRES)

5. Lessons Learned and Future Directions

- Incorporation of recorded CROSS sessions into the ACC CRU Orientation/Onboarding program provides early introduction to OPS, QA, and RA clinical research activities
- Increase topics in future CRES sessions to reflect the expanding relevance of QA and RA
- Continued engagement from physician and Penn collaborative department SMEs have resulted in upcoming presentations concerning Financial Toxicity in Cancer Treatment (Penn Center for Health Incentives and Behavioral Economics) and Cardio-Oncology (Penn Thalheimer Center for Cardio-Oncology)

Figure

 Penn Medicine
Abramson Cancer Center | Clinical Research Unit

presents

Clinical Research Operations Supplemental Series

CROSS

PURPOSE: The Clinical Research Operations Supplemental Series (CROSS) provides educational opportunities on topics related to the daily operations of the Abramson Cancer Center (ACC) Clinical Research Unit (CRU) and collaborating departments.

Upcoming Presentations

Wednesday, January 19, 2022 @ 8:00am-9:00am

“Radiation Scares Me! But I Love to Collaborate... A Beginner’s Guide to Befriending the Beam”

Presented by: John P. Plastaras, MD, PhD

Wednesday, February 22, 2022 @ 8:00am-9:00am

"Drug-Drug" Interaction

Presented by:
Mitchell Hughes, PharmD, BCPS, BCOP Kristin Markiewicz, PharmD, BCOP

Wednesday, April 27, 2022 @ 8:00 am

"Hereditary Cancer Genetics 101"

Presented by: Jessica Ebrahimzadeh, MS, LCGC
& Kelsey Spielman, MS, LCGC,
Penn Medicine Genetic Counselors

Thursday, May 5, 2022 @ 8:00 am

"Female Fertility Preservation: Improving Access to Care"

Presented by: Suneeta Senapati, MD, MSCE
Director of Third Party Reproduction & Co-Director of Fertility Preservation, Penn Fertility Care