The Utilization of Microsoft Teams for Clinical Operations Team Management

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Background

The clinical research operations team (clinical research coordinators and data coordinators) grew quickly between 2018 and 2022 and this created the need for increased standardization, structure, and oversight. Communication and standardized procedure management was further hampered by institutional network constraints on clinical research coordinators requiring them to be on a separate network from the rest of the team. The need for increased organization, standardization of practices, and seamless communication led us to review many systems to support our workflows.

Objectives

- Increase information dissemination while decreasing the need for one-on-one messaging.
- Process standardization of processes across a staff of 20+ individuals
- Increased workload and performance measurement transparency.
- Consistent access to process documentation and decision history

Methods

We implemented Microsoft Teams to create various "teams" that centralized CRC screening, agenda items for meetings, management discussions, pathology report review, coverage requirements, and disease flowchart access. We also created disease specific groups such as "Breast Team" that included any members that worked on that disease to all have central discussions. Discussions are cataloged and kept in a searchable knowledgebase for future retrieval and reference. We also utilize Teams to make weekly schedule assignments. See Figure 1 for an overview of the dashboard created.

Results

Figure 1: UICC CTO Microsoft Teams Clinical Research Operations Management
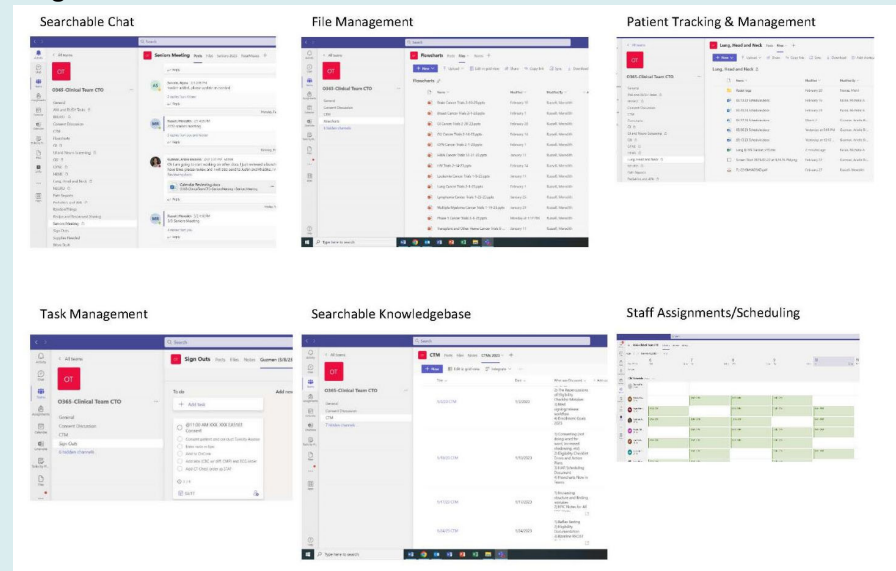
Conclusions

This tailored implementation of Microsoft Teams has greatly increased our productivity and ability to oversee the clinical research operations of a larger team. Coordinators started having smaller targeted group discussions that only the right people. The exclusion we have found is just as important as the inclusion. Too many people were being involved in discussions that they did not need to be, resulting in decreased concentration and message fatigue. The importance of targeted communication is vital and the visibility and standardization of clinical research coordinator and data coordinator tasks helps both the staff perform their jobs in an efficient and effective way while also giving management a way of overseeing a steadily growing team.

Acknowledgements