Strategies to retain, recognize, and reward Clinical Trials Office Team Members

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Background
During 2019-2022, the Clinical Trials Office (CTO) of Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center (LCCC) at Georgetown University experienced a 61% average staff turnover, seeing 100% turnover in some functional areas. The Lombardi CTO sought to formalize onboarding, training/education, and professional advancement of CTO staff in order to recognize and reward staff members, while progressing to higher levels of job responsibility, increase job satisfaction, and retain skilled CTO staff members.

Goals
1. Recognize and reward CTO staff who demonstrate the required elements of the Career Advancement Plan (CAP)
2. Provide staff with clear career trajectory
3. Increase job satisfaction for CTO team members
4. Improve onboarding, training, and education for CTO team members
5. Retain skilled CTO team members

Solutions & Methods

Goals
1. Refinement of professional behaviors and activities for well-rounded CAP applicants (e.g., volunteerism)
2. Plans for additional levels of achievement with increased staff retention
3. Continued efforts to synergize onboarding, training, continuing education, and CAP activities
4. Formalized staff satisfaction surveys

Outcomes
- Lombardi CTO and Human Resources leadership reviewed, and adjusted as necessary, all position descriptions to ensure standardization and accuracy of job profiles, grading, and compensation
- Successful deployment of the Lombardi CTO CAP
- Increased levels of promotion of Lombardi CTO team members initiating CAP, across all levels
- Increased staff retention with a 20% average staff turnover in 2022/2023, reduced to <5% in 2024 (<10% vacancy)

Lessons Learned
Prior to implementation of this plan, there was a lack of key requirements for job satisfaction and staff retention within the Lombardi CTO. The Lombardi CTO CAP helped to mitigate high levels of staff turnover (≥20%), in conjunction with a formalized Lombardi CTO training and education program.

Future Directions
1. Refinement of professional behaviors and activities for well-rounded CAP applicants (e.g., volunteerism)
2. Plans for additional levels of achievement with increased staff retention
3. Continued efforts to synergize onboarding, training, continuing education, and CAP activities
4. Formalized staff satisfaction surveys

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