Development and Implementation of an Evidence-Based Clinical Orientation Program

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**Background:**
Until early 2020 the clinical research staff at the Laura and Isaac Perlmutter Cancer Center lacked a formalized orientation program for Clinical Research Nurses (CRNs) and Clinical Research Coordinators (CRCs). A survey conducted in 2019 revealed that 34.5% of the clinical team had not received a formal orientation. This led to varied and inconsistent training approaches, confusion about role delineation, and workflow standardization challenges.

**Goals:**
- A Comprehensive Evidence-based Orientation Program
  - Improving preparedness for CRC and CRN roles
  - Enhancing overall staff satisfaction

**Solutions and Methods:**

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<th>Year</th>
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| 2020 | o Developed and implemented orientation program comprised of didactic, problem-based, and experiential learning  
    | o Aligned with Association of Clinical Research Professionals (ACRP) competency domains:  
    |   - scientific concepts  
    |   - ethical and participant safety  
    |   - investigational products  
    |   - development and regulation  
    |   - clinical study operations (Good Clinical Practice)  
    |   - study and site management  
    |   - data management and informatics  
    |   - leadership and professionalism  
    |   - communication and teamwork |
| 2021 | o Program expanded to include shadowing opportunities with the Research Biospecimen Management Unit, enhancing understanding of workflows and fostering collaboration |
| 2022 | o Clinical program manager position developed, a role dedicated to CRC supervision, onboarding, and education |
| 2023 | o Transitioned from a local shared drive and paper packets to a SharePoint platform, enhancing accessibility and usability  
    | o Length of training plan tailored to each new hire based upon level of experience  
    | o Clinical orientees began to spend 5 days per week on site for the first 4 weeks of their orientation to maximize exposure to different clinical scenarios, even though majority hired under a flexible work model |

**Outcomes:**
- **Satisfaction:**
  - A 2023 survey revealed 72.4% of CRNs (n=21) and 73.7% of CRCs (n=14) expressed satisfaction with their training, a notable improvement from 2019.

- **Efficiency:**
  - Timeline for the orientation, which initially took an average of 14 weeks (n=9), has been successfully reduced by 26.4% to 10.3 weeks (n=9).

- **Performance & Quality:**
  - Remarkable 60% reduction in preventable reportable incidents from 2019 (n=20) to 2023 (n=8), while simultaneously managing a 25% increase in accruals and 40% increase in treatment trials from 2019 to 2023.

**Future Directions:**
- Continuous improvement remains a key focus, with an emphasis on learning modules and self-graded testing through online learning platform, incorporation of video resources, and interactive group sessions.
- Future plans include developing tailored orientations for the unique needs of CRNs, nurse practitioners, non-therapeutic clinical research coordinators, and an eventual sub-investigator orientation program.

**References:**

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