

Enhancing Workforce Readiness and Growth: A Comprehensive Orientation and Professional Development Strategy at The University of Kansas Cancer Center Clinical Trials Office

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1. Background

The University of Cincinnati Cancer Center Clinical Trials Office (UCCC CTO) strives to encourage physicians to engage with clinical research as PIs, Sub-Is, or by writing their own research protocols or by serving on research committees. But these can be daunting asks of busy junior or new faculty who may never have had prior exposure and understanding of the resources available to support research. In collaboration with the heme-onc Fellowship Director the UCCC CTO designed a novel rotation for second- and third-year Fellows with the UCCC CTO to gain exposure to the research support framework and de-mystify the ways to engage with clinical research.

2. Goals

Pre and post rotation surveys were designed to identify the rotation's impact on a Fellow's possible career interest in research, their interest in engaging in research activities as a PI, Sub-I, protocol development, and research committee service. In addition, surveys were designed to evaluate how valuable Fellows found the information during the rotation, their likelihood to recommend it to a colleague, and their understanding of the resources that exist to support research at UCCC.

3. Solutions and Methods

A two weeklong rotation was developed with the first week comprised of asynchronous learning via Canvas about core research concepts, outlines of resources and committees for research start-up, and required institutional trainings (CITI). At the end of the first week the Fellow met virtually with the research coordinators they would shadow in the second week. The second clinical week involves direct observation of a research coordinators visit preparation and completion, meetings with data, regulatory, and QA staff with a focus on CTO staff only rather than shadowing PIs.

4. Outcomes

Eight Fellows completed pre-rotation surveys, and six post-surveys are completed to date (100% Fellows who already have rotated). The career goals for Fellows did not typically alter after rotation, those who did want to work in academic medicine in research still did, and those who were not considering it still were not. However, when asked about interest in participating in specific research activities rather than research as a career path, we identified a marked decrease in the amount of neutral or mildly interested responses as Fellows (now knowing more about the research infrastructure and actual research tasks) were more confidently able to assess their interest. For example, pre-rotation interest in serving as a PI on their own IIT was: Not Very (37.5%), Mildly Interested (12.5%), Neutral (12.5%), Very Interested (37.5%). Whereas post-rotation it was: Not Very (33.3%), Interested (16.7%), Very Interested (50%), and 100% (n=6) said they would recommend rotation to a colleague and that it improved their understanding of the CTO's function.

5. Learned and Future Directions

Based on Fellows feedback we are expanding the rotation to include two additional weeks in an experimental therapeutics' clinic shadowing our most experienced Investigators in addition to observing CTO staff. Management of the rotation by CTO Education program staff is efficient and has produced

materials that are also useful for educating our Investigators and CTO staff which we will continue to develop with our experienced Investigators.

Figure

