Streamlining Clinical Trial Cost Recovery: Enhancing Invoicing Accuracy and Collaboration at UFHCC

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BACKGROUND

The UF Health Cancer Center (UFHCC), like many academic research institutions, faced ongoing challenges with cost recovery for clinical trials. Historically, subject visit tracking was conducted using spreadsheets, a method prone to manual data errors and inefficiencies. Invoicing was handled by a central unit that lacked specialized knowledge of cancer-specific protocols, which limited scalability and created inconsistencies. Additionally, communication breakdowns between clinical and finance teams often led to billing delays and hindered timely resolution of discrepancies.

Goals: Achieve a 25% increase in cost recovery from FY2022–FY2025 by:
1. Utilizing OnCore to centralize financial/trial data.
2. Improving cross-team communication and training.
3. Expanding finance team capacity and accountability.
4. Conducting regular audits and establishing feedback loops.

METHODS AND SOLUTIONS

The UF Health Cancer Center improved clinical trial cost recovery by transitioning to OnCore, restructuring its finance team, and enhancing communication with coordinators.
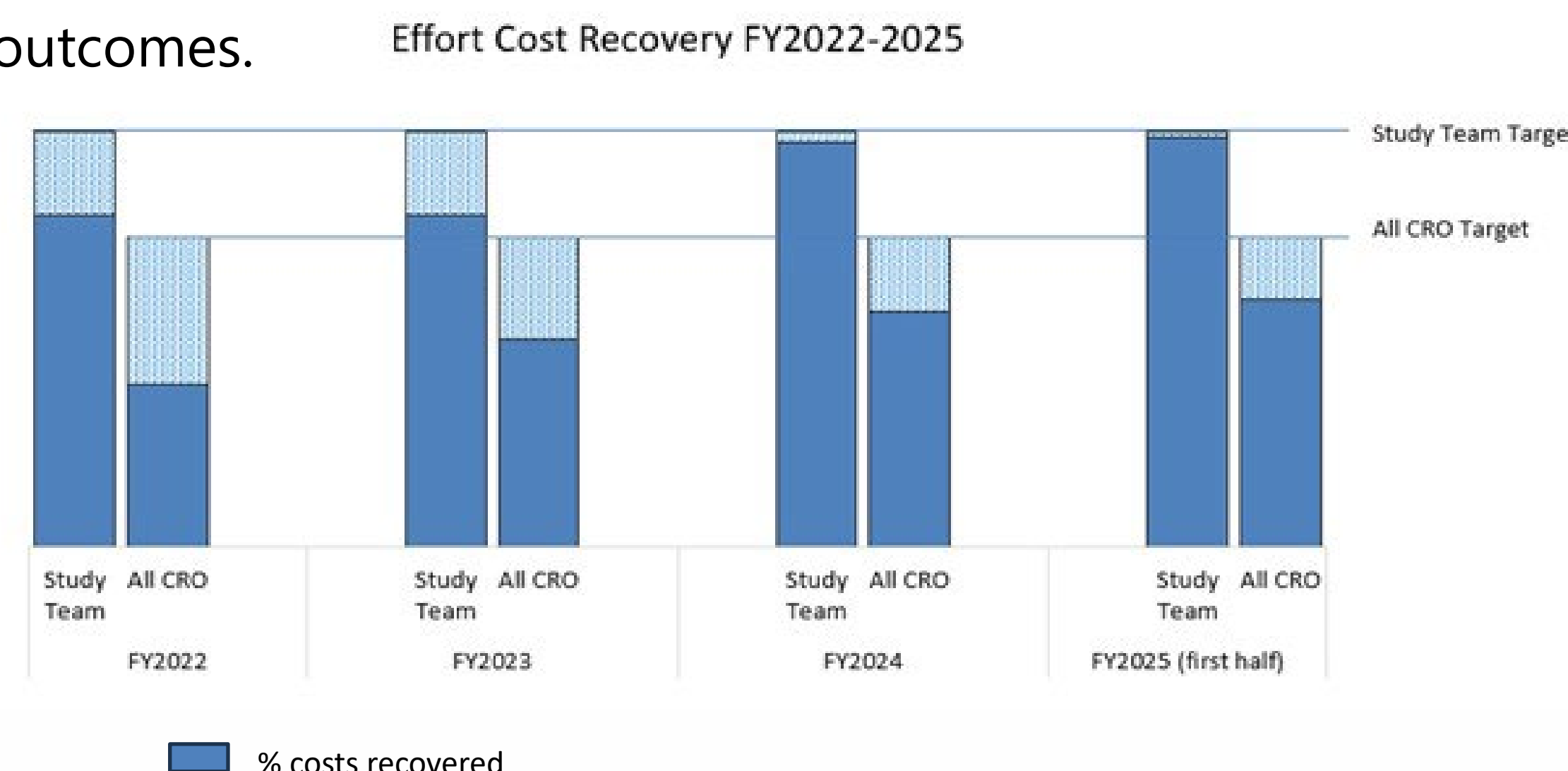
Transition from Excel to OnCore:
- Centralized real-time data for improved visibility and reporting.

Restructure of Finance Team:
- Shifted invoicing to internal staff with cancer-specific knowledge.
- Added 2 Research Admins + 1 Graduate Intern

Coordinator Training:
- Emphasis on visit documentation and sponsor-required proof.
- Creation of budget "cheat sheets" for study-specific clarity.

Regular Auditing and Reporting:
- Weekly subject visit and deposit audits.
- Use of automated OnCore reports to track invoice status.
- First-enrollment finance reviews to validate setup.

RESULTS

As of mid-FY2025, UFHCC reported a 24% increase in cost recovery—nearly reaching its target goal ahead of schedule. This progress reflects the effectiveness of the implemented methods and demonstrates how improved systems, staffing, and communication contribute to measurable financial outcomes.

Effort Cost Recovery FY2022-2025

Study Team Target
All CRO Target

Study Team All CRO   FY2022
Study Team All CRO   FY2023
Study Team All CRO   FY2024
Study Team All CRO   FY2025 (first half)

■ % costs recovered

CONCLUSIONS

Lessons Learned:
- The initiative underscored the importance of consistent communication across teams to ensure everyone understands their roles in the billing process.

- Providing clinical staff with pre-award training on how procedures align with payments significantly minimized post-award financial discrepancies.

- The adoption of OnCore brought about greater access to financial data and streamlined tracking.

- Real-time audits proved more effective than traditional closeout reviews, allowing billing issues to be identified and corrected proactively.

Future Direction:
- Building on this success, UFHCC now aims to increase the proportion of the entire Clinical Research Office (CRO) effort recovered through clinical trial revenue by 25%. To support this expanded goal, the team is developing robust dashboards and comprehensive reporting tools to facilitate real-time auditing, ongoing staff education, and integration of best financial practices across all phases of the clinical

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