

## **Building Comprehensive Blended Learning Models to Strengthen Clinical Trials Onboarding**

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### **1. Background**

The Human Subject Research (HSR) Academy at Moffitt Cancer Center developed a comprehensive blended onboarding program to meet the demands of an increasingly complex clinical research environment. The program integrates instructor-led training (ILT), self-paced eLearning, and hands-on practical exercises tailored to various clinical research roles. This multimodal structure supports diverse learning styles, strengthens core knowledge of clinical research principles, and ensures new staff build both conceptual understanding and practical competence for compliant participation in clinical trials.

### **-2. Goals**

The primary goal is to equip new research staff—across multiple responsibilities and disciplines—with a strong foundation in clinical trial operations. Differentiated onboarding pathways include ILT, eLearning modules, and essential ancillary classes such as radiology, pathology, and tissue core. These sessions reinforce effective cross-team communication, clarify expectations, and support protocol compliance by helping staff understand the operational contributions of partner departments.

### **3. Solutions and Methods**

Rolespecific pathways were designed to align training content with staff responsibilities while emphasizing communication standards, institutional policies, and SOP-driven practices.

- Clinical Research Coordinator (CRC)/Clinical Trial Coordinator Associate (CRCA)/Clinical Research Nurse (CRN): Eight-day onboarding focused on coordinator responsibilities, plus required ancillary classes.
- Clinical Data Coordinator (RDC): Eight-day training emphasizing data quality and management practices.
- Non-Therapeutic Research Office (NTRO): Three-day onboarding focused on nontherapeutic study workflows.
- Principal Investigators (PI): Condensed onboarding session or an online PI Handbook outlining expectations and available resources.
- Other Research Staff (e.g., monitors, auditors, finance analysts, screening coordinators, activators, regulatory specialists): Targeted sessions selected from the CRC pathway based on role relevance.

This structured model ensures staff receive both foundational knowledge and applicable context for efficient, accurate, and compliant clinical trial conduct while accommodating different learning needs.

### **4. Outcomes**

Between July 2024 and February 2026, 350 staff members completed the HSR Academy onboarding program across role specific pathways. Post-training surveys showed substantial gains in confidence and

perceived competence. Among CRC pathway participants (n=48), self-reported high confidence increased from 35 percent pretraining to 83 percent post training. The blended model has strengthened operational understanding, supported smoother transitions into role specific training within departments, and promoted high-quality, compliant clinical research across the organization.

### 5. Lessons Learned and Future Directions

The blended approach—combining ILT, eLearning, and hands-on practice—has proven effective in balancing structure with flexibility. Continuous feedback collection has highlighted the need for expanding differentiated pathways, especially for roles involved in complex clinical trials. Future enhancements will focus on refining content delivery methods, expanding specialized modules, and further integrating practical, real-world applications to support staff performance and long-term retention.

### Figures

