

Large Group Format Seminars for Clinical Research Staff Support, Engagement, and Continuing Education at OHSU Knight Cancer Institute

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1. Background

Since 2021, the Knight Cancer Institute Education & Onboarding program has created and implemented larger group training opportunities for the Knight clinical research management (CRM) and clinical research quality & administration (CRQA) teams. The teams are invited to the following recurring training opportunities: Lunch & learns (L&L), continuing education series (CES), clinical research bereavement (now Self-Care) support group, and clinical research (CR) symposium. Most of the educational opportunities are recorded and are available to all OHSU employees.

2. Goals:

Each training opportunity has separate goals with the overarching goal of supporting and engaging CR staff.

L&L: Provide education relevant to research, healthcare, the Knight Cancer Institute, OHSU, and the greater community.

CES: Provide refresher training on CR topics, including updates to processes and development of new resources.

Self-Care: Provide a safe space to support staff and promote self-care as staff navigate hardships experienced while working in oncology research.

CR Symposium: Increase connection and share information within the CR enterprise as well as foster professional development.

3. Solutions and Methods

The Education & Onboarding program consists of two CR trainers who manage and coordinate these offerings, which received buy-in from leadership prior to implementation.

The L&L and CES are generally held monthly. The presenters for the L&L are typically investigators or other OHSU departments describing their roles, projects, or contributions to OHSU. The CES is facilitated by the CR Trainers with the focus on training updated materials or reviewing CR topics. The CES topics are primarily identified by management, trainers, training requests by staff, or monitoring/auditing visit reports. Three of the CES presentations were facilitated by external speakers focused on Diversity and Equity in Medical Research.

Category: Training, Career Development, and Staff Retention – Completed Project

The Self-Care Support Group is held quarterly and is facilitated by a social worker from OHSU's Employee Assistance Program. The first 15-20 minutes are focused on resources and training, such as coping skills and how to talk with patients when they receive difficult news. The rest of the 45-minute session is left for open discussion.

The CR Symposium is a subcategory of the L&L series and is held once a year. Presenters share process improvement projects, including projects submitted to AACI-CRI.

4. Outcomes

Since 2021, 86 large group seminars were offered to CR staff. These offerings are now reported to leadership and summarized in the CCSG. The breakdown of the number of each group type offered and average attendance:

L&L: 38; average attendance 44 (min: 23; max: 120)
CES: 31; average attendance 54 (min: 31; max: 100)
Self-care: 14; average attendance 15 (min: 8; max: 32)
CR Symposium: 3; average attendance 77 (min: 53; max: 100)

CR staff who attend can document continuing education credits to maintain credentials such as CCRP or ACRP.

5. Lessons Learned and Future Directions

Depending on bandwidth of the two CR trainers, these large group seminars are not always feasible to organize.

Large format educational seminars provide an opportunity to meet the needs of varying audiences at different times during the day and week. This shows creative ways to address needs of the larger clinical research enterprise.