

*Category: Clinical Trial Operations (Trial Start-up, Regulatory, Finance, Data Management, IITs) – Work in progress*

## **Oncology Clinical Trial Incentivized Reward Program: Driving Precision Accrual, Faster Activation, and High-Quality Execution**

T. Roberts, G. Duvall, M. Gosky, W. Cunningham

*UK Markey Cancer Center*

### **1. Background**

The Oncology Clinical Trial Incentivized Reward Program is designed to align Markey Cancer Center (MCC) Clinical Research Organization (CRO) disease site team performance with sponsor benchmarks by incentivizing precision accrual, rapid study activation, and high-quality data execution. Performance is reinforced through quarterly recognition of top-performing disease site teams, while maintaining full adherence to ethical standards, ICH-GCP, and regulatory compliance requirements.

### **2. Goals:**

Our goals were designed to improve three critical drivers in our oncology research portfolio: speed to activation, accrual performance, and quality outcomes.

This is not just a competition — it's an operational alignment strategy.

Our goal is to create measurable, transparent performance improvement while strengthening engagement and accountability across teams.

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

- Each disease team's points are tracked throughout the quarter
- Results are displayed on a (KY Derby) horse-race themed performance bulletin board
- At the end of each quarter:
  - The top-performing disease team (highest total points) selects a reward from the Top Performing Rewards list to be used in the following quarter
  - Smaller recognition rewards are issued to top performers within each performance domain

To ensure this remains constructive and equitable, we are implementing safeguards:

- Portfolio size normalization
- Phase complexity multiplier
- Data collected is current data – effective 01/01/2026
- Improvement scoring/Bonus caps
- No penalization for sponsor-controlled delays

This is designed to promote engagement, not burnout, or unhealthy competition.

### **Top Performing Rewards – Major Awards**

(Selected quarterly by overall quarterly top-performing disease team)

- Remote Workday

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- Catered Lunch, BBQ, or Picnic
- Keeneland Event (April / October)
- Early Departure (2:00 PM)
- Delayed Arrival (10:00 AM)
- *Additional rewards to be added*

#### **Top Performing Rewards – Spot Recognition**

(For domain-specific or individual achievements)

- Specialty Coffee
- Sweet Treats (Candy / Ice Cream)
- Select an item from our basket of goodies
- *Additional rewards to be added*

#### **4. Outcomes**

##### **Expected Positive Outcomes After First Quarter**

1. Accrual
  - a. 15–30 percent increase in enrollment velocity
  - b. Reduced time to first patient by 10–20 days
  - c. Improved clinical preparedness for pipeline trials
  - d. Improved prescreening efficiency
2. Activation (from a clinical standpoint)
  - a. 20–35 percent reduction in time to activation
  - b. Improvement in clinical preparedness to open a trial to enrollment.
  - c. Increased efficiency with Clinical sign-off; sign-off occurring before stated benchmarks
3. Deviations/Data entry
  - a. 30–50 percent reduction in trial deviations
  - b. Decrease in preventable visit window errors
  - c. 60-80 percent reduction in outstanding data/query response resolution
  - d. Improved monitoring readiness

#### **5. Lessons Learned and Future Directions**

It was important that we were transparent while intentional with the proposed incentive program. We initially met with our team to gauge their interests and learn what would incentivize or encourage them. We have learned that recognition drives behavior.

It has been necessary to maintain a current leaderboard where the teams can see their performance and standings across all domains. We will also highlight improvement trends, not only absolute rankings. Our leaderboard has become a frequent topic of conversation.