

Enhancing Scientific Review and Progress Monitoring to Improve Committee Management and Portfolio Oversight

M. Brelsford, K. McCaffrey, K. Moffett

Moffitt Cancer Center

1. Background

As an NCI-designated cancer center, our protocol review and monitoring system (PRMS) oversees scientific review, data safety, and the monitoring of scientific progress for all studies. The program supports six scientific review committees (SRC) and one data safety monitoring committee (DSMC), with approximately 1,600 studies under its purview. In 2025, 525 studies required scientific progress review. Many operational workflows relied heavily on manual processes, creating significant administrative burden for study teams, coordinators, and committee members. To address these challenges, we identified the need to modernize our systems to improve efficiency, accuracy, and timeliness. We also engaged with peer institutions to discuss best practices and ensure alignment with cancer center support grant (CCSG) expectations.

2. Goals

- Utilize technology for scientific review operations to reduce manual burden
- Improve accuracy and timely identification for closure of studies not meeting accrual goals
- Decrease scientific review timelines and streamline submission requirements

3. Solutions and Methods

We updated policies to align with institutional best practices and national standards, exempting unnecessary submissions such as cooperative group protocol amendments, single⁰⁶patient expanded access protocols, and administrative amendments. These changes decreased the burden on study teams and the committees while ensuring that required submissions remained meaningful. Zero- accrual based closure timelines were revised from 12 to 9 months, and timelines for rare disease studies were reduced from 18 months to one year. We also expanded the review process to include suspended studies to ensure our portfolio remains current and relevant.

To modernize operations, we leveraged institutionally supported technologies. A Power BI dashboard pulls data from our clinical trial management system (CTMS) and provides real-time metrics to committees and leadership. We implemented automated notifications to reduce administrative workload and improve communication speed. We also introduced tools such as Microsoft OneDrive and ZoomAI Companion to streamline board meeting documentation.

4. Outcomes

Over the past five years, SRC submission-to-approval timelines decreased by 32 percent (median of 28 to 19 days), with a 14⁰⁶day average for treatment interventional trials. During this period, 1,802 new studies were SRC reviewed, with 990 studies being reviewed full-board. Between 2021–2025, 2,784 studies underwent scientific progress review, and 82 were closed due to low or zero accrual. We began tracking determination letter release dates in 2025, and the average time from committee review date to team notification improved to four days. We have received positive feedback from study teams,

Category: Prioritization & Scientific Review – Completed project

committee members, and leadership regarding these changes and the overall reduction in administrative burden.

5. Lessons Learned and Future Directions

As we continue updating our policies and incorporating technological advancements, we identified additional potential improvements and are evaluating the feasibility of using tools such as Microsoft Copilot to summarize study reviews prior to board meetings, and REDCap to streamline non-human subject research reviews. We continue to reduce rigidity for studies with additional review pathways (industry, NCCN, etc.) while maintaining strict rigor for institutional studies. We plan to expand our dashboards to automate accrual monitoring reports and are evaluating tools such as Microsoft Forms to streamline response format to the committees. We anticipate continued reductions in review timelines and administrative burden as additional enhancements are implemented.