



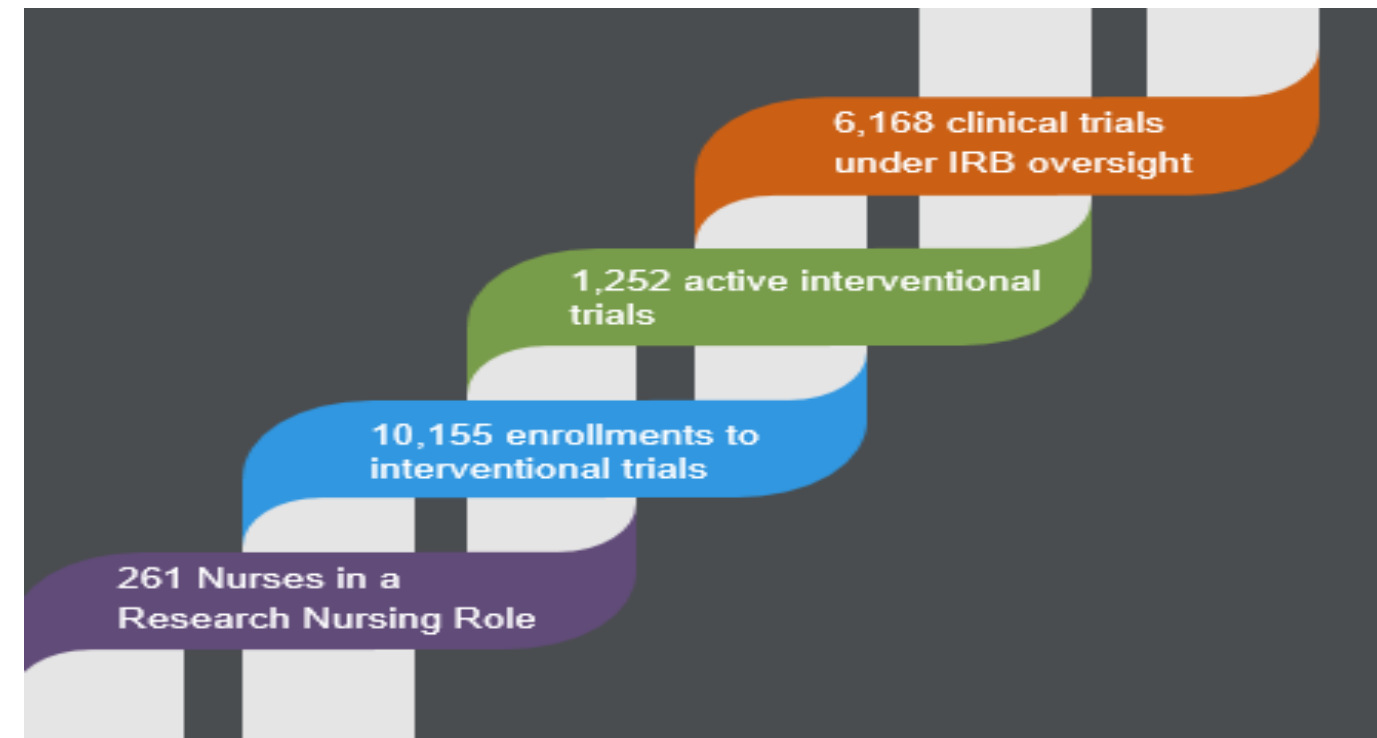
Evolving Recruitment Strategies through the Development of a Research Nurse Residency Program for New Graduates

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Background

Research is an integral element in the care of patients and the mission of MD Anderson Cancer Center (MDACC).



The clinical research nurse (CRN) plays a pivotal role in managing the trials, including assisting the Principal Investigator in:

- Reviewing eligibility criteria
- Coordinating care
- Monitoring the patient for safety concerns
- Reporting concerns according to regulations

Recognizing the growing challenge of recruiting and retaining CRNs and its potential to impact the ability to conduct trials, interprofessional leaders worked collaboratively to address this concern and identify evidence based, and innovative solutions. As a result, design and implementation of the Research Nurse Residency (RNR) program for nurses with less than one-year experience, was identified and implemented as one solution.

Goals

- Develop an additional means of recruitment of CRNs
- Reduce the vacancy rate and improve retention of CRNs throughout the institution
- Provide a strong foundation and orientation program to foster a robust, experienced CRN workforce for the institution

Program Development

The program was developed through a unique collaboration between the Division of Nursing and Clinical Research Administration. A sub team comprised of nursing leaders in both clinical and research areas met weekly to develop the program and curriculum. Progress reports and executive and departmental presentations were effected to gain feedback and promote program buy-in. The RNR program for the CRN was developed to be complementary to the institution's existing Clinical Nurse Residency Program as well as with current onboarding CRN practices.

Methods Implemented

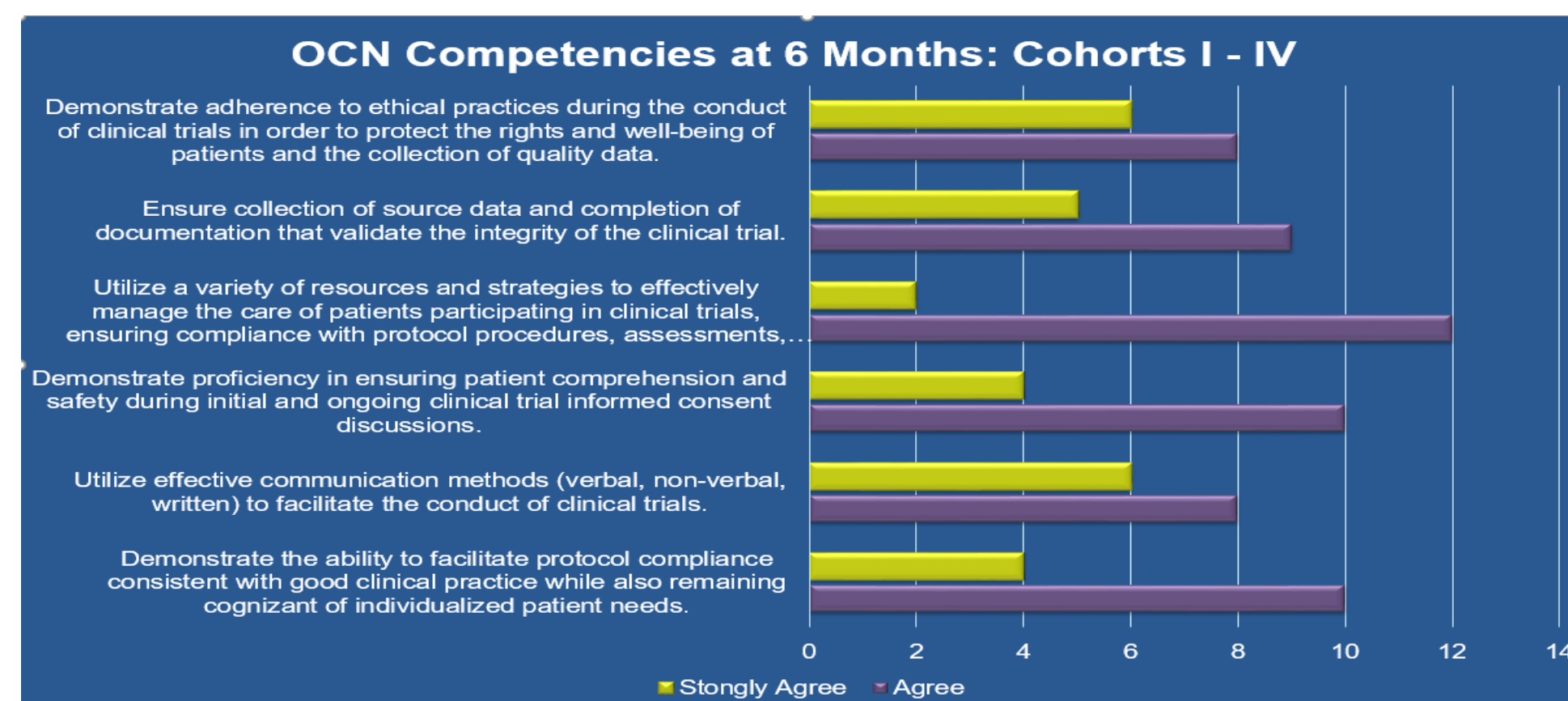
The RNR curriculum consists of a four-week orientation followed by monthly residency classes over a twelve-month period. Orientation concentrates on the role of clinical research using a variety of educational methods. In the assigned department, the participant is paired with an experienced CRN for department specific orientation. Monthly residency classes expand on clinical research topics, including simulation exercises, oncology content, transition to practice, and education specific to the MDACC institutional role of a CRN. Support from a dedicated clinical research educator is also provided.



Outcomes

- The first cohort of four RNR participants started in October 2016.
- More than 875 applications have been received for the program.
- 40 Residents have started the program:
 - 26 completed and graduated from the program
 - 13 currently active in the program
 - 5 left the institution
 - 5 transferred to another position within the institution
 - 31 remain in research roles
- Retention rates correlate with those outside of the program.

Outcomes are measured utilizing the Casey-Fink Graduate Nurse Experience survey with questions related to Oncology Trials Nurse Competencies. Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive from both residents and research departments, with departments participating in multiple cohorts. An unanticipated benefit has been increased interdepartmental communication and collaborations across the institution resulting in sharing of best practices and other new initiatives.



Lessons Learned

Preceptors who are engaged and empower the CRN residents to become competent CRNs prove to be essential to success.

In addition, a robust department orientation is key to provide the CRNs with a strong foundation of learning the role with the accompanied educator support to provide added opportunities and resources.

Future Directions

Currently, the initial four-week orientation is provided to CRNs in the residency program. Future plans include expanding the intensive, expanded orientation to all new CRN hires.

The research nurse residency continues to recruit and hire graduate nurses for up to three cohorts per year.



References

Casey, K., Fink, R., Krugman, M., & Propst, J. (2004). The graduate nurse experience. *The Journal of Nursing Administration*, 34(6), 303-311.

Oncology Nursing Society. (2016). Oncology trials nurse competencies. Retrieved from https://www.ons.org/sites/default/files/OCTN_Competencies_FINAL.PDF.