



CROSS to CRES: The Evolution of a Clinical Research Operations Supplemental Series to an Accredited Clinical Research Education Series

Terease S. Waite, PhD, RN; Colleen Tabery, BA; Erica Dahlmeier, MPH, CCRP; Christina Vikingstad, HSE, MS
Abramson Cancer Center, Clinical Research Unit
University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA

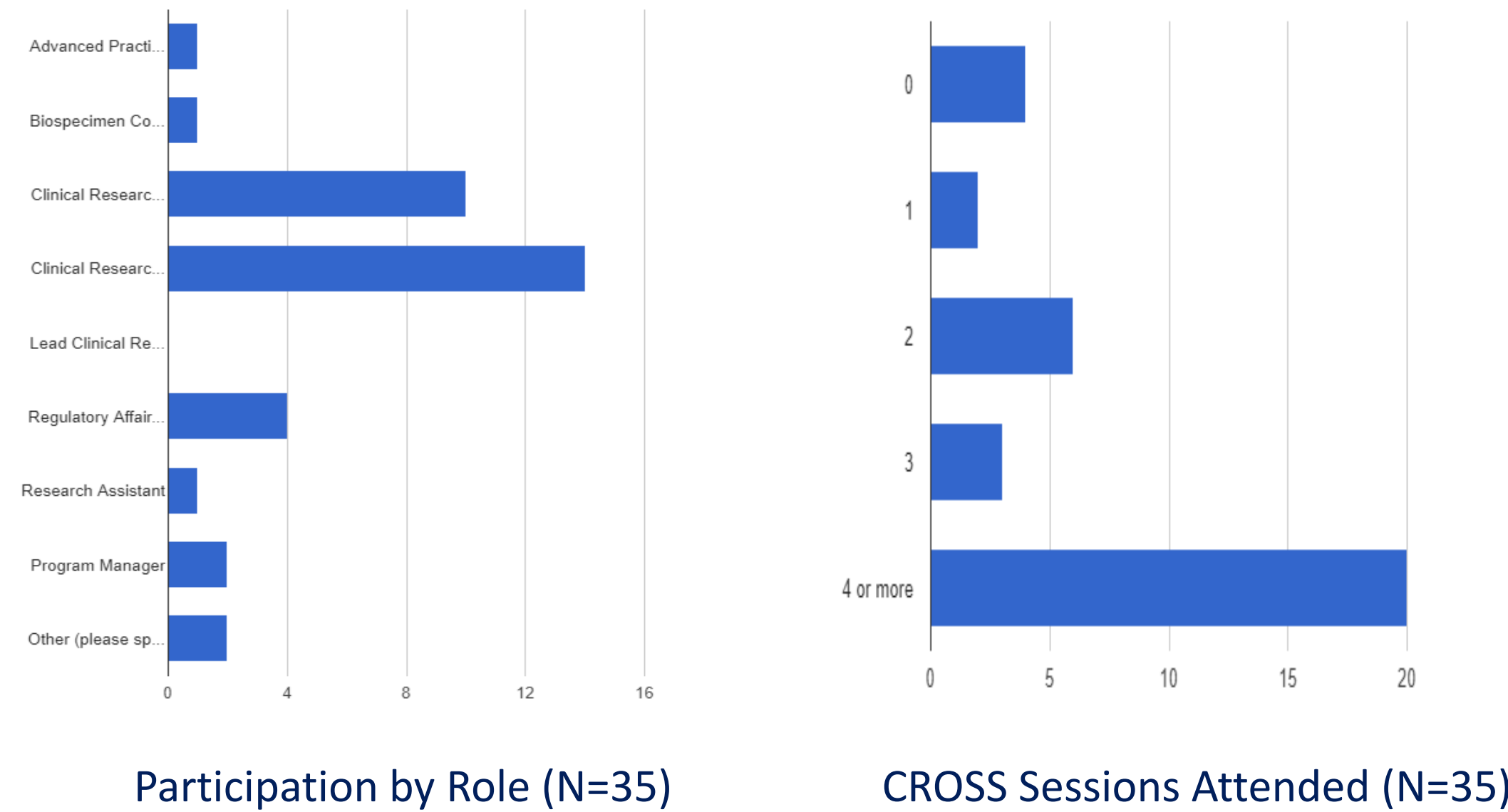
BACKGROUND

The COVID-19 Pandemic resulted in attrition of non-physician research staff, or Clinical Research Professionals (CRPs), across all levels of experience and roles within the 12 oncology research teams in the Abramson Cancer Center (ACC) Clinical Research Unit (CRU). ACC CRU Central Leadership assessed orienting/onboarding CRPs and determined additional clinical operations (OPS) training was necessary. In May 2021, the Clinical Research Operation Supplemental Series (CROSS) was initiated to bridge the gap between the knowledge/experience of CRPs in orientation, as well as to engage and to provide on-going OPS education for current CRPs working hybrid schedules. The success of CROSS resulted in its evolution to an accredited education activity for ACC CRU research nurses, research coordinators, pharmacists, advanced practice providers, other credentialed CRPs, and physicians.

GOALS

- Provide OPS educational opportunities for ACC CRU CRPs and ACC CRU physicians relevant to clinical research.
- Ensure content relevance by basing CROSS sessions on perceived CRU research needs, issues identified by CRPs, and drawing presenters from ACC CRU clinicians and ACC/University of Pennsylvania (Penn) collaborating departments.
- Stimulate information-sharing and collaboration among the ACC CRU oncology research teams, ACC CRU clinicians, and collaborating Penn departments through engagement and participating in CROSS activities.
- Continue to improve the knowledge, skills/strategies, and competencies of CRPs, while supplementing preexisting OPS training with Quality Assurance (QA), and Regulatory Affairs (RA) research knowledge and skills.

PARTICIPATION



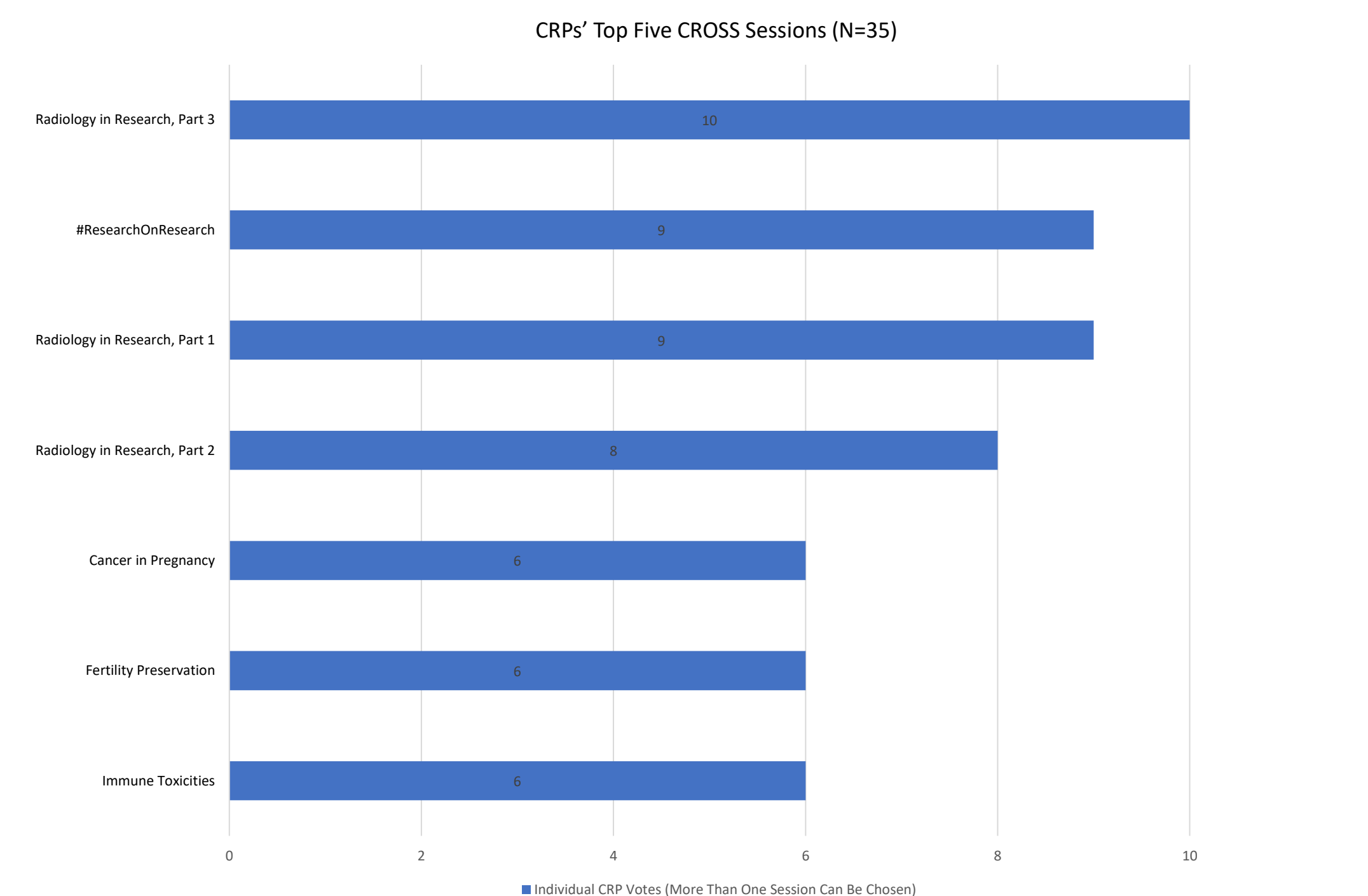
SOLUTIONS/ METHODS

The ACC CRU Central Leadership identified the initial CROSS topics and engaged ACC CRU oncology clinicians and Penn collaborating department (e.g., pharmacy, fertility preservation, radiology) subject matter experts (SMEs). Accreditation of CROSS was acquired in recognition of the continuing education and career development opportunities for CRPs and to stimulate clinician SMEs' interest in presenting CROSS educational sessions. Presentations were recorded to support future learning opportunities for CRPs and orientation training for CRPs.

OUTCOMES

- Attendee feedback from initial CROSS sessions inspired future topics and encouraged clinician SMEs to provide educational sessions ("Jehovah's Witnesses—The Medical and Ethical Challenge in Clinical Research," "Hallmarks of Cancer," and "Immune Toxicities").
- Approximate attendance of the CROSS sessions averaged 50-80 of the 140 ACC CRU CRPs and physicians
- The increasing intersection of OPS, QA, and RA subject matter necessitated CROSS' incorporation of an existing RA education series in January 2023—CROSS became the accredited Clinical Research Education Series (CRES).

CROSS PRESENTATIONS



FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- Incorporation of recorded CROSS sessions into the ACC CRU orientation program provides early introduction to OPS, QA, and RA clinical research activities.
- Continued engagement from clinicians and Penn collaborative department SMEs have resulted in upcoming presentations concerning Financial Toxicity in Cancer Treatment (Penn Center for Health Incentives and Behavioral Economics) and Cardio-Oncology (Penn Thalheimer Center for Cardio-Oncology).