

## Background

The University of North Carolina (UNC) Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center (LCCC), a public state institution, must adhere to state parameters dictating position classification, compensation, education, and related experience requirements. To meet staffing demands, LCCC needed a mechanism to hire talented individuals with high potential and more limited experience, creating a feeder pool where individuals could gain experience for higher-level positions.

## Goals

LCCC sought to strategically meet stringent state hiring parameters, while simultaneously cultivating a pipeline of trained individuals that could meet future staffing demands.

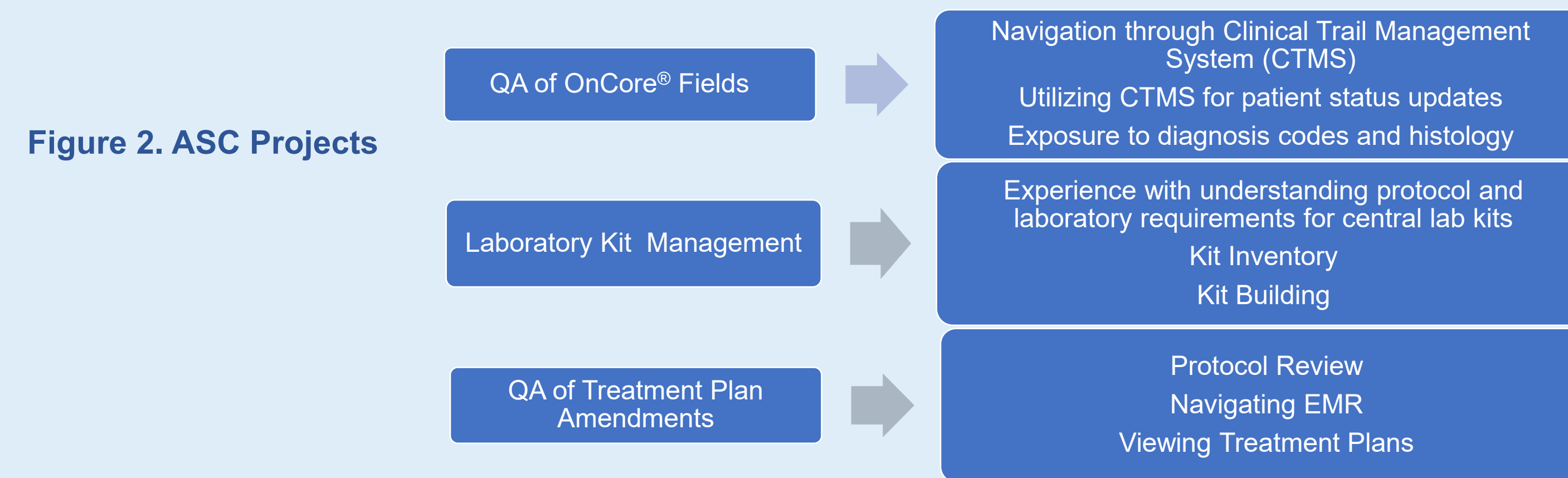
Figure 1. Orientation Checklist Sample

Category	Task	SOP/Training Reference Prerequisites	SC	ASC
Epic/Oncore	Confirm if additional training is needed for role, Does access need to be updated		X	X
Regulatory	Confirm study training, DOA updates, IRB Approval		X	X
Clinic Flow	Overview Clinic Flow	Study Coordinator 101	X	X
Clinic Flow	Shadow a Study/Data Coordinator		X	X
Scheduling	Treatment visits	Scheduling 101	X	
Scheduling	Plotting appointments	Scheduling 101	X	X
Scheduling	Follow-up Visits	Scheduling 101	X	X
Study Visits	Reading a protocol	Protocol 101	X	X
Study Visits	Prescreening Subjects	Study Coordinator 101	X	X
Study Visits	Informed Consent: 1. Observe 3 and Practice 3	SOP and WI for Informed Consent	X	
Study Visits	Clinical Research Progress Notes	Epic Template, Patient 101	X	
Data Management	Research chart building and maintenance	SOP for Research Charts, Data Management 101	X	X
Finance	Subject Reimbursement	Instruction sheet	X	X
Monitoring Visits	Scheduling monitoring visits	SOP and WI for External Monitoring, External Monitoring course	X	X
Study Activation	SSV ,SIV and start up meeting	SOP for Start up Meetings, Training, Shadowing	X	X
Study Activation	QA study specific lab flowsheets	Template w/ Instructions	X	X

## Solutions and Methods

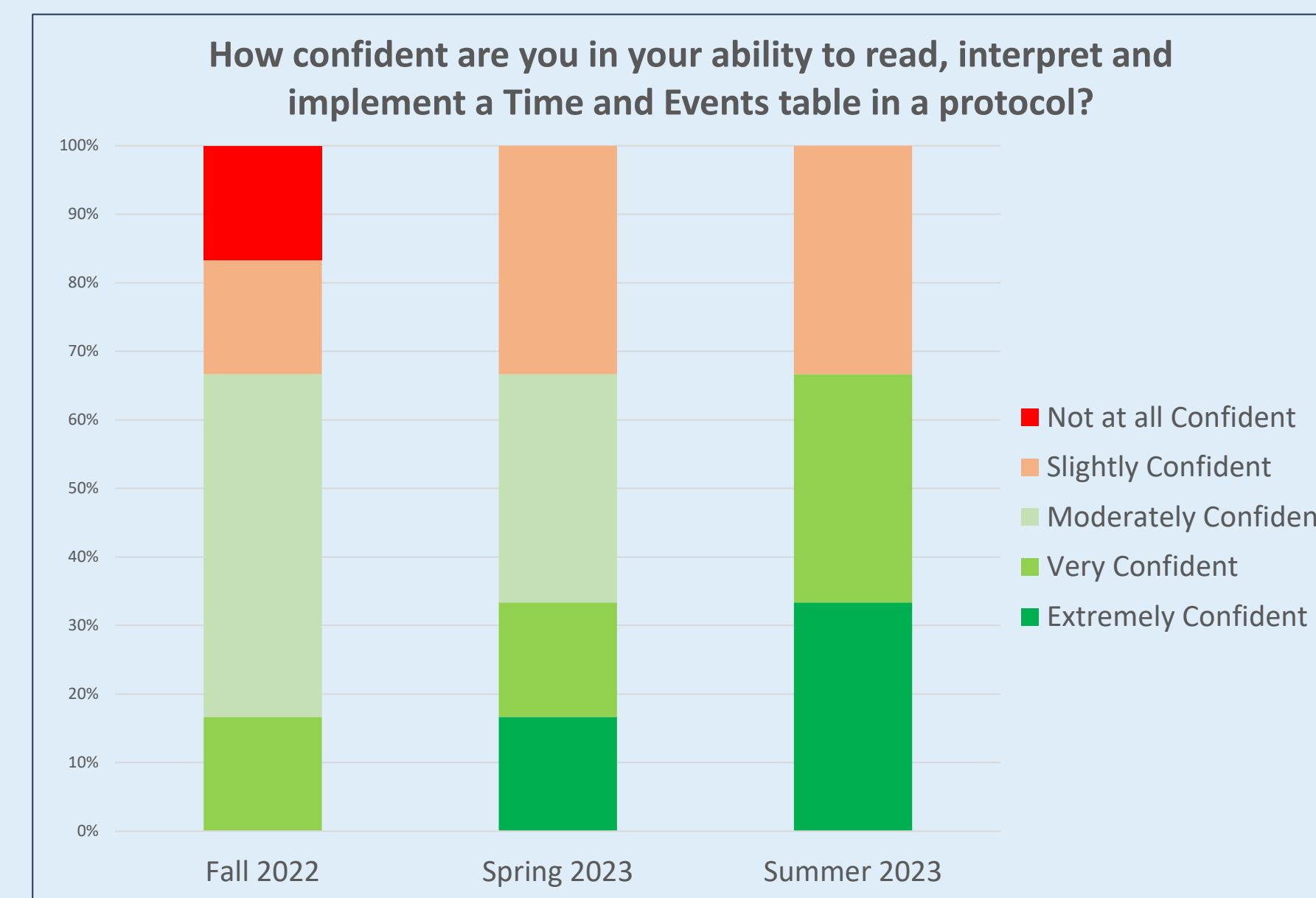
The assistant study coordinator (ASC) role was created to serve as a new entry-level position which would circumvent state requirements of 1 year of experience. An onboarding program was established to bridge the lack of experience in the clinical setting. This involved the creation of an orientation checklist (Figure 1) designed to introduce increasingly complex research tasks.

The responsibilities of the role included working closely with SCs to learn and conduct basic elements of oncology clinical trials. (Figure 2)



A pre/post Likert assessment, based on the orientation checklist, was utilized to identify training gaps, and assess strengths and weaknesses. (Figure 3)

Figure 3. Pre/Post Assessment Example



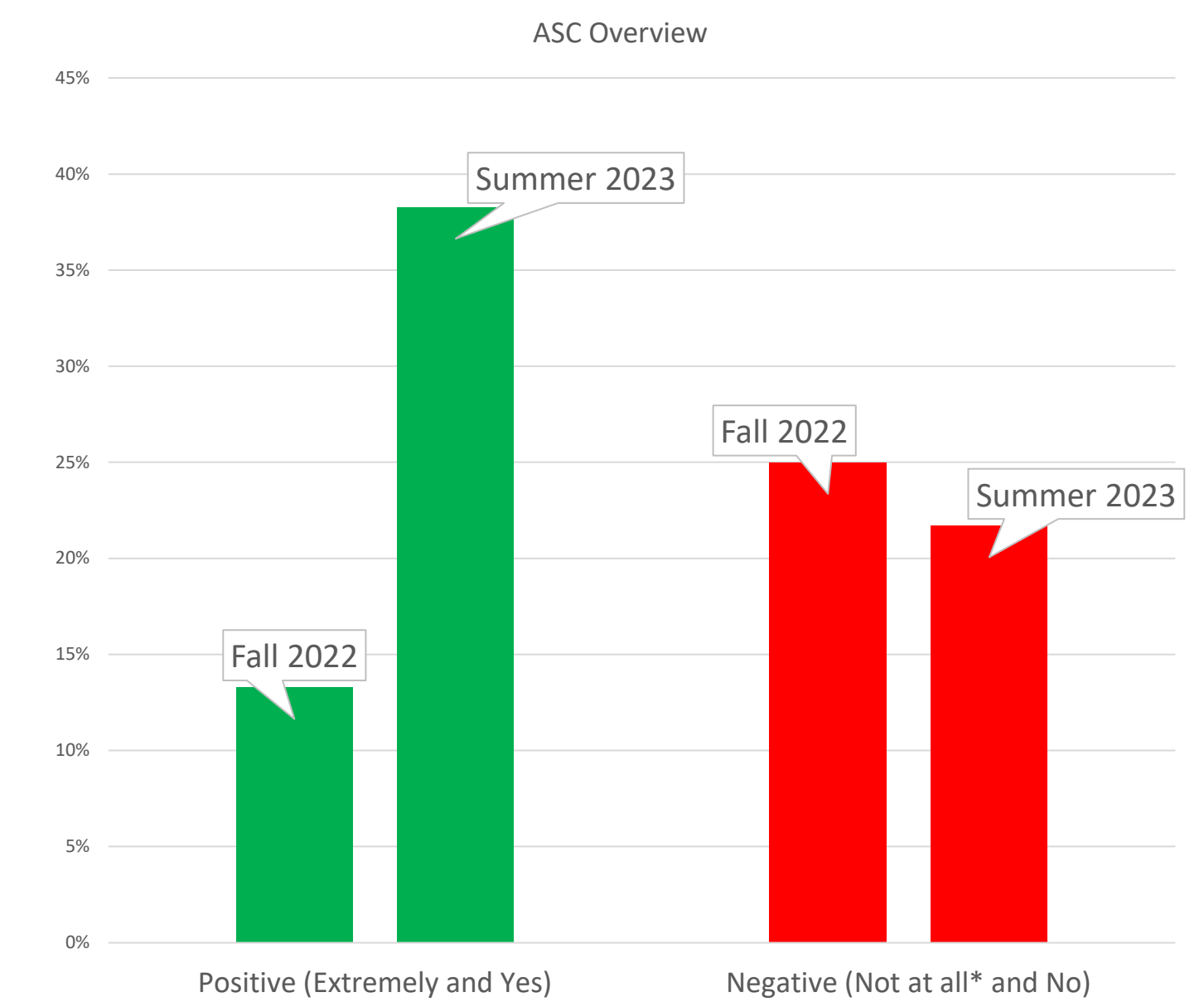
## Lessons Learned and Future Directions

Post onboarding, the ASC position needed additional structure therefore, a mentorship program (Figure 5) was designed to provide support, ongoing training, and increase job satisfaction. Integrating this novel position into an established office also provided professional growth for existing staff as they contributed to shaping and supporting the new role. Promotion from the ASC role has allowed staff to enter a new role with prior training in internal policies, systems, standard operating procedures (SOPs), and trial portfolios. The addition of the ASC role has proven to be a successful approach to hiring, training, career development, and staff retention.

## Outcomes

The ASC role was a success. Six individuals were identified and hired in May 2022. Of the 6 inaugural ASCs, 4 were internally promoted with the experience gained, 1 opted to remain an ASC, and 1 was externally promoted. The 5 who remained at LCCC are now approaching 2 years of employment.

Figure 4. ASC Overall Responses



Introduction of increasingly complex tasks over an annual timeline allowed ASCs to master concepts and contribute to the study team without the full weight of responsibility that accompanies the SC role. The positive assessment responses increased from 13% to 38% and the negative responses decreased from 25% to 22% percent over a period from fall of 2022 to summer of 2023. (Figure 4)

Figure 5. ASC Mentorship

Ideas for Mentors
Goal: Focus training and then return to teams that need help with the tasks
Check in daily, morning
Discuss daily tasks
Consider ongoing tasks that week
Monitoring visits
SAEs
Data locks
New patients
Connect ASC to other members of team for shadowing opportunities (3 week rotations)
Confirm 2 focus studies
Review and regularly update orientation checklist

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