

Decreasing Turnover Rates for Research Coordinators through Enhancing Support Structures

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1. Background

For 2021 and 2022, on average, 25 Data and Regulatory Research Coordinators (RCs) turned over annually, equating to a 32 percent vacancy rate. Existing RCs on the team were subject to absorbing the workload of the team member who left while also taking on the role of mentor to the new hire.

2. Goals

Decrease overall turnover within the data/regulatory team.

3. Solutions and Methods

In Q2 2021, we added a fourth supervisor to the team, decreasing the RC to supervisor ratio allowing for more one-on-one time and increased overall support. In Q3 2021, we adopted the hybrid work model, two days in the office and three remotely, with flexibility on which days RCs were in office. In Q3 2022, we added a Quality Assurance Trial Management Team to decrease workload burden from turnover by completing and auditing regulatory and data during vacancies until new employees are trained. Over the last two years, we continued to enhance our formal training program for the RCs, lessening the workload for the new hire's mentor. The team increased department communication via weekly update emails from the management team.

4. Outcomes

The 2023 vacancy rate decreased to 16 percent from 32 percent in 2021 and 2022. Of the 13 RCs who left their positions in 2023, three of those individuals were promoted within the department (two to Research Supervisor and one to IIT Program Manager).

5. Lessons Learned and Future Directions

Overall, increased one-on-one time with supervisors, enhanced formal training, implementation of hybrid work schedules, establishment of career advancement opportunities within the department and the introduction of the Quality Assurance Trial Management Team collectively led to a decrease in turnover rates. Continuing to improve in each of these will be vital to preventing burnout in the role leading to steady or decreased vacancy rate.