The Center for Clinical and Translational Sciences (CCTS) Biobank at The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UTHealth) recently launched the Sample Location and Enhancement Distribution (SLED) software application.

The application features an automated system that provides sample request management, which allows the primary investigator to easily search for data and samples in the CCTS Biobank. Additionally, contributors and requestors will have a single federated platform that offers a door-to-door tracking system.

“We are very excited about this application. SLED will facilitate increased participation by contributing principal investigators, researchers and other members of the Texas Medical Center community,” said Krystle Nomie, Ph.D., coordinator of the CCTS Biobank. “Our goal is to provide a user-friendly platform that will meet the needs of every party involved.”

Prior to the launch of this application researchers encountered challenges identifying sample owners or the quantity and availability of their samples.

Additionally, sample owners would independently track the status of their samples which hindered the ability to provide real time information on the quantities or samples available.

“We are always working to enhance the Biobank experience for both researchers and samples owners,” Nomie said. “We want our researchers to maximize their time working on their projects with the resources the Biobank provides and less time on the phone inquiring about availability.”

The CCTS Biobank led by Eric Boerwinkle, Ph.D., at the School of Public Health and Jennifer Sanner, Ph.D., at the School of Nursing collaborated with the informatics team at the School of Biomedical Informatics to develop and launch SLED.

The CCTS Biobank consists of over 200,000 human samples and related clinical data. Researchers can request samples of plasma, serum, DNA, buffy coat and red blood cells. Some of the major disease categories include cardiovascular diseases, aneurysms, cancer and autoimmune system disorders.

For additional information on the CCTS Biobank, visit www.uthouston.edu/biobank/.
Sponsored Projects Administration (SPA) seeks to provide the highest quality sponsored projects administration service for UTHealth faculty and staff. We continually review our services to assess how SPA can better serve our institution. The Clinical Research Finance (CRF) team was recently created to facilitate sound fiscal management of clinical research at UTHealth. The CRF team currently provides faculty and staff with expense analysis, payment analysis, review of final clinical account closeout, and FMS guidance.

The creation of a team focusing on clinical research finance provides a unique opportunity to implement the planned rollout of the coverage analysis policy drafted by the Clinical Trial Resource Center (CTRC). In order to take full advantage of this opportunity, Trae Rohan, formally with the CTRC, has transferred to the CRF team.

This summer, the CRF team will publish the coverage analysis policy and procedure effective 9/1. In the meantime, Trae will continue to review and approve industry-sponsored coverage analysis as planned by CTRC effective 6/1.

If you have any questions or would like to request CRF’s services, feel free to contact Heather Cody, 500-3983, or Heather.Cody@uth.tmc.edu.

The CRF team looks forward to providing excellent clinical research finance guidance and support. Please feel free to reach out to us at grp-crf@uthouston.edu.

THE CLINICAL RESEARCH FINANCE TEAM

Heather Cody
Supervisor, Clinical Research Finance – Heather has been with UT-Health for 7 years. Heather’s tenure has been in SPA on the Post-award Finance team.
Phone: 713-500-3983

Amaris Ogu
Clinical Research Financial Analyst – Amaris has been with UT-Health for 2 years. Amaris’ previous position was in SPA on the Grants team.
Phone: 713-500-3984

Trae Rohan
Regulatory Specialist – Trae transferred to SPA from CTRC. Trae has experience in clinical trial billing and compliance as well as coverage analysis.
Phone: 713-500-3583
To address concerns about IRB fee billing, a new billing process has been established. IRB fees for initial and continuing review, as well as the administrative fee for initial review of protocols by outside IRBs, will be billed directly by the IRB office to the sponsor.

**The Process**
Cristina Dyke, Administrative Services Officer in the Clinical Research Unit (CRU), will generate an invoice based on the submission received by the IRB office. The invoice will be sent to the sponsor contact who is listed on the application and will be copied to the UTHHealth study team contacts.

Note that the IRB application for initial review has been revised to include sponsor contact information for IRB billing purposes. For existing research, Cristina will contact the study team to obtain the sponsor contact information.

**Process for Protocols Reviewed by Chesapeake IRB**
For protocols reviewed by Chesapeake IRB, please make arrangements with the sponsor to pay Chesapeake directly. If the sponsor does not agree to be billed directly by Chesapeake, ensure that the sponsor will pay for all Chesapeake IRB invoices plus 30% in indirect costs.

**Current IRB Fee Structure**
The current IRB fee structure is found here. Note that IRB fees are charged for the initial and continuing review of industry-sponsored studies but not for investigator-initiated studies or for studies funded by federal agencies or non-profit foundations.

For questions about an IRB fee invoice, please contact Cristina Dyke. To share general comments or suggestions on the new IRB fee billing process, please contact clinicaltrials@uth.tmc.edu.
**Upcoming Training**

**Study Coordinator Monthly Forum**
- **Objective:** Discuss best practices in clinical research management and network with administrators and staff from various research groups within UTHealth.
- **Date:** June 24, 2014, July 22, 2014
- **Time:** 11:30 am – 1:00 pm
- **Location:** MSB 2.135
- **Lunch provided to the first 40 participants**
- Registration is not required. More information [here](#).

**iRIS Training**
- **Objective:** Hands-on training in the iRIS system to submit research protocols involving human subjects to UTHealth’s CPHS for review by the IRB.
- **Date:** July 2, 2014; July 29, 2014
- **Time:** 1:30 pm – 4:00 pm
- **Location:** UCT 1160 (subject to change)
- **Parking will be validated.**
- Registration is required. Register [here](#).

**Clinical Research Budgeting and Billing**
- **Objective:** A hands-on workshop the clinical trial budgeting and billing process at UTHealth. The course will cover the process for coverage analysis, building a research budget, developing a billing grid and the process for creating EG accounts and Case Accounts.
- **Date:** June 24, 2014; Aug 26, 2014
- **Time:** 1:30 pm to 3:30 pm
- **Location:** MSB B400
- Registration is required. Register [here](#).

**Orientation for Clinical Research Staff**
- **Objective:** This half day program provides an overview of clinical trial research at UTHealth. This course will cover CPHS review process and approval process, the MHH hospital review process, and a brief introduction to clinical trial management.
- **Date:** June 24, 2014; Aug 26, 2014
- **Time:** 8:00 am to 1:00 pm
- **Location:** MSB 2.104B
- Registration is required. Register [here](#).

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**Registration for the October 2014 CLINICAL RESEARCH EDUCATION will open mid Summer.**

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**About the Clinical Trials Resource Center**

It is the mission of the Clinical Trials Resource Center (CTRC) to provide a single portal of expertise and best practices for study teams in order to facilitate efficient, compliant, and ethical study conduct and management. The CTRC office is located at UCT 790. Please visit [www.uthouston.edu/ctrc](http://www.uthouston.edu/ctrc) for more information.

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