A common hot topic in the world of clinical trials is enrollment. Higher enrollment means additional income to fund more research projects. So how do we maximize our enrollment in active studies? This is an easy question with various answers and “Patient Recruitment and Retention in Clinical Trials, 10 Strategies for Success” is the perfect aid for coaching you with simple reminders for recruitment as well as great advice concerning retention in your clinical trials.

Loading your site down with every trial offered is not always the best policy in terms of recruitment. Know your own database of patients. This will help when determining if you really do have those 20 patients with specific eligibility for one trial. Those patients start to spread thin when recruiting patients for multiple studies with similar diagnoses and each study is requesting 20 subjects.

Use the database as the main tool to recruit eligible patients. These are patients already loyal to your clinic and would likely return to the clinic for future visits regardless of being in a clinical trial. They are more likely to learn about the trial, be excited about participating, and be more compliant.

Set a written plan on paper that provides the sponsor an idea of how you plan to enroll at your site. Jennifer Whitlock, the Vice President of Clinical Site Services, pointed out that “sponsors are becoming increasingly choosy on the sites they initiate on their studies; they want to work with sites that are high performing, enroll efficiently, and are organized with a solid plan of action.” Helping the sponsor understand your site and your site’s needs at the feasibility stage will effectively communicate a realistic enrollment and budget.

When thinking of entering a new trial, remember to consider which previous trials have worked, have not worked, and why. Honesty is the best policy when approaching feasibility. If a trial failed due to the lack of patients in the practice and enrollment was based heavily on outside advertising, then think twice before participating. If a trial failed due to solely focusing on outside advertising and you feel you have the patient capacity in your clinic, then set a plan of action with the study team to change the recruitment strategies. For more on recruitment visit the CTRC website.
The orientation for clinical research staff was launched on June 4, 2013 at the CCTS conference room in UTPB. There were 9 participants at this session including 4 summer interns who will be part of a clinical research study team.

This educational program is designed to be a general overview of clinical trial research at UTHealth. This five hour program will cover the basics of CPHS (UTHealth IRB) review and approval process, Memorial Hermann Hospital review and approval process, clinical trial finances management, clinical trial, management.

These sessions are open to research staff, research fellows, and investigators involved in clinical research. While they are geared towards research staff who are new to research or new to UTHealth, experienced research staff are welcome to attend. The course is intended to be complementary to the three day Clinical Research Education Course – Basic.

Catherine Thorstenberg, RN, a research nurse at the clinical research unit participated in this course. Cathy said, “The course was very detailed and helped knit together the various pieces. It helped me understand the big picture.”

Orientation for clinical research staff will generally be scheduled from 08:00am-12:30pm four times a year. The next session will be on August 6, 2013. Register here. If you have suggestions for our Fall 2013 session or feedback on our Spring 2013 session, we would love to hear from you, please send your comments to clinicaltrials@uth.tmc.edu.

Next orientation for clinical research staff will be held on August 6, 2013 at UTPB 1100:55.

---

**ADVERSE EVENT DECISION TREE**

*Many research sites express prostrated confusion over when to report an adverse event to the IRB... As a public service, we offer this handy decision-making tool. (Note: circles and real questions, squares are satire—use at your own risk.)*
NEW FACES

**Von’Diza Gaines** is the new coordinator for CPHS Panel #1. Von’Diza has 3 years of experience in the clinical research industry. A majority of her background experience stems from her work as an IRB Coordinator, working with all indications and phases of Oncology trials. She received a Bachelor’s of Business Administration degree from the University of Houston-Downtown; and majored in International Business and Finance.

**Kirk Hamilton** came into nursing after 13 years in the military as an Arabic linguist and eight years in healthcare marketing. He is certified as a Clinical Nurse Leader and a Certified Cardiovascular Care Coordinator. He most recently has been a stroke/chest pain coordinator at two hospitals in the Houston area, where he underwent and passed primary stroke certification with TJC, DNV and Chest Pain Center Certification with the Society of Cardiovascular Patient Care. Kirk is married to Kimber, and they have a daughter, Sidney. They enjoy riding bikes as a family, traveling and cooking. Kirk also enjoys photography.

**Amber Jacobs** is a Stroke Research Coordinator in the Department of Neurology, Current Projects: ARTSS-2 (Argatroban) and CLOTBUST-ER studies. Graduated from The University of Texas at Austin with a BS in Neurobiology. She has previous Research experience from Scott and White Hospital working as Coordinator for the Department of Neurosurgery in various movement disorder projects. She also has a heavy background in bench science working on such fields as Parkinson’s and hepatic encephalopathy. She is excited to be making a full transition from the lab to actual clinical trials!

**Doha Ayish** graduated from medical school in 2010, from the University of Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates with a MBBS certificate. She moved to Houston 2 years ago to pursue her education and apply for residency programs in Neurology. Doha accepted a position at UTHealth in Neurology as a Research Assistant II. Currently, Doha is working on her USMLE Board exams and is expecting a newborn in 8 weeks.

---

**CERTIFICATION FOR CLINICAL RESEARCH STAFF**

**CCRP certification**: For those of you interested in becoming a certified research professional, the next test date at The Methodist Hospital in Houston, TX is August 3, 2013 with a registration deadline on June 21, 2013. More information [here](#).

**CRC certification**: The next test date for cerfitifed Clinical Research Coordinator is September 5 – 21, 2013 and registration deadline is July 31, 2013. More information [here](#).
UPCOMING TRAINING

Study Coordinator Monthly Forum
Objective: Discuss best practices in clinical research management and network with research administrators and staff from various research groups within UTHHealth.
Dates: Every 4th Tuesday of the month
Time: 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Location: MSB 2.135
Lunch provided to the first 40 participants
Registration is not required.
More information here.

Clinical Research Education
Objective – Promoting excellence in clinical trial management for research nurses, study coordinators and other research staff. Day 1 focuses on clinical trial finances and contracting, day 2 and 3 focus on clinical trial conduct.
Time: 8 am to 4 pm
Location: Cooley University Life Center.
Registration will be opened in Summer 2013.

Orientation for Clinical Research Staff
Objective – This educational program is designed to be a general overview of clinical trial research at UTHHealth. This five hour program will cover basics of CPHS (UTHHealth IRB) review and approval process, Memorial Hermann Hospital review and approval process, clinical trial financial management, and clinical trial management.
Dates: August 6 and December 3, 2013.
Time: 8 am to 1 pm
Location: UTPB 1100:55
Registration is required. Register here.

iRIS Training
Objective: Hands on training in the iRIS system to submit research protocols involving human subjects to the IRB.
Dates: Jun 6 and Jun 26, 2013.
Location: UCT 1160 (subject to change)

About Clinical Trials Resource Center
It is the mission of the Clinical Trials Resource Center to provide a single portal of expertise, and best practices for the study team to facilitate efficient, compliant, and ethical study conduct and management. The CTRC office is located at UCT 790. Visit www.uthouston.edu/ctr for more information.

Sujatha Sridhar, MBBS
Director
713-500-3622

Thea Troetscher, RN
Regulatory Specialist
713-500-3583

Marilyn Perry, CCRP
Regulatory Specialist
713-500-3587

Catrina Coverdale, BS, CCRP
Training Coordinator
713-500-3578

Ngozi Okafor, MPH
Graduate Assistant
713-500-3551