An education program for busy researchers

Sarah Fowler-Dixon
Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis

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An Education Program for Busy Researchers

Sarah Fowler-Dixon Frankel, PhD
Education Specialist
Human Studies Committee
Washington University School of Medicine

Midwest Bioethics Meeting, January 2004
Program Attributes

- Practical,
- Provides live-instruction in conjunction with an on-line tutorial,
- Geared for adult learners,
- Flexible enough to meet educational and scheduling needs.
- Cost effective
  - minimal staff
  - utilizes the talents and expertise of professionals who have an interest, specific training, and/or specialized knowledge to lead its workshops, seminars, conferences, and retreats
Program’s Purpose

• Educate anyone conducting or reviewing research at the University
  – includes approximately
    • 300 committee members,
    • 20 Human Studies Committee (HSC) staff members,
    • all faculty and staff vital in the conduct of the 3500 new and on-going human subjects protocols seen yearly by the HSC.
Program’s Objectives

• Provide information that will assist in the submission, conduct, and evaluation of research

• Ensure conduct of research meets proper ethical and regulatory standards
Foundation

• Adult learners prefer educational experiences to be relevant and immediately helpful in their daily lives or to be directly related to an area of interest.

• Needs of the adult learner analyzed and compared in relation to needs of organization and job function.

(Boone, 1985, pp. 19 – 38)
Foundation

• Teamwork approach with the adult educator as facilitator

• Active learning.
  – Class discussions, guided practice, peer teaching, and dependent group activities.
  – Small classrooms or conference rooms
  – Instructor to student ratios should be 1 to 15.
  – Learners are visual.
  – Lecture should last no more than 15 minutes followed by some type of activity.

(Boone, 1985, Harmin 1994, Herlin et al., 1995)
Design

• Based in adult education theory

• Designed to handle all educational needs
  – remediation,
  – initial and on-going education
  – clarification of issues
Design Meets Regulatory Compliance

- Human Studies Protection Regulations
- Good Clinical Practice 3.1.3
- Institutional Policy
- HSC Assurance of Commitment
- AAHRPP Accreditation Standard I-4
- Federal Wide Assurance
Methods

• Quarterly newsletters;
  – transferred to Lotus Notes format
• Bi-monthly question and answer sessions;
• Presentations at classes, departments, faculty meetings, committee meetings, conferences;
• Private educational sessions;
• Monthly new member orientations;
  – Augmented then reorganized
  – Made more practical
  – Currently being studied
Methods

• Application forms and guidelines;
  – clarified, updated, authenticated. References added
• On-line human studies training module;
  – Changing to CITI in 2004
• Website  http://medschool.wustl.edu/hsc/.;
  – revised and expanded
• Establishment of a St. Louis IRB Consortium;
• In-services for HSC staff;
• Annual Town Hall Meetings, IRB retreat, regional or national conference;
Methods

• In-house resource library;
• Mock IRBs.
• Chairs’ Meetings.
  • information is presented and explained
  • HSC Chairs pass along information to respective committees
• HSC chairs and staff educate others through
  • comments at committee meetings,
  • critiques of protocol submissions,
  • letters and telephone calls to the investigators,
  • sharing of relevant articles.
Methods

• Heighten Committee Member/Staff understanding by having them
  – teach
  – write articles for the newsletter
  – lead seminars
  – conduct investigations into various areas of concern
  – sit on task forces
Evaluation

• Formal
  – qualitative questionnaires
  – individual feedback sessions
  – AAHRPP (Association for the Accreditation of Human Research Protection Programs)
Evaluation

• Informal
  – feedback from committee members, staff and researchers through
    • letters,
    • e-mails,
    • telephone calls
    • personal remarks

  – return of participants for follow-up sessions beyond what is required
Monitoring

• Continual monitoring of program effectiveness to provide the types of educational activities that
  – appeal to the population
  – provide necessary information to protect human subjects
Expansion Efforts

• “Live-instruction” offerings
  – Concentrate on areas of interest or difficulty
  – Designed to target specific audiences
    • novices,
    • intermediate,
    • or experienced personnel.
  – Facilitated by knowledgeable personnel

• St. Louis IRB Consortium
• Committee Members and Staff
Replication

• Personnel knowledgeable and experienced in
  – a variety of educational pedagogues
  – administering educational programs

• For adult populations, adult learning specialists with
  – a knowledge of psychology
  – or experience in dealing with diverse populations
Educator Qualifications

• Doctorate in Education, specializing in curriculum and instruction and higher education

• Extensive experience in developing and implementing educational programs for adult learners,

• Experience working in a health care setting

• Experience meeting needs of diverse populations and learners.
Replication

• Adequate
  – Financial support for salaries, materials, program advertisement, and on-going training for educators
  – Support staff,
  – Office and classroom space,

• University Commitment
  – Allowing the HSC to have a full-time educator
  – Mandating initial education
  – Encouraging on-going education
Outcomes

• Evidence that the education program is meeting the needs of professional research staff and faculty are
  – requests for private and group tutorials,
  – referrals to be educated,
  – attendance at workshops, seminars, retreats, and conferences,
  – numerous thank you notes.
Outcomes

• A result of these efforts is the interest generated in becoming more than a participant in the sessions.
• Many faculty and staff wish to lead or present scheduled sessions.
• Others approach the HSC with topic areas to be researched, discussed, or presented either in “live-instruction” sessions or in written format.
• As a secondary result, others beyond those volunteering are drawn into the process and educational outreach is expanded.
Contact Information

Washington University School of Medicine
Human Studies Committee
22 N. Euclid Ave., Ste. 233
St. Louis, MO 63117

314-633-7456