Quality Management for Research Projects

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What is Quality?

“The act of overseeing all activities and tasks needed to maintain a desired level of excellence. This includes creating and implementing quality planning and assurance, as well as quality control and quality improvement. It is also referred to as total quality management (TQM).”

Read more: http://www.investopedia.com/terms/q/quality-management.asp#ixzz25yXAaGuN

Quality: A Continuous Process in Research

What are the ‘Products’ in Research?

‘Products’ refer to those tangible items that mark project milestones, and represent deliverables to the client or project sponsor.

Example EMBLEM Project ‘Products’

- Identification of case-control subjects
- Signed informed consent forms
- Specimen(s)
- Data collection forms
- Site visit reports

Quality Checklists

- Used to verify that a set of required steps has been performed (and as trained)
- Ensures consistency in frequently-performed tasks
- Documents what procedures were completed, and notes comments on those left incomplete
- Used to initiate additional training or quality checks to take place
- Completed checklists become part of project files
Keys to Quality Management

- Success requires the participation of all project team members
- Management staff are required to provide the resources needed to succeed
- Quality should be planned, designed, and built in: the cost of preventing mistakes is generally less than the cost of correcting mistakes

Project Roles in Quality Management

- Project Manager
  - Assures all staff are in compliance with quality procedures
- Quality Manager(s)
  - Develops quality procedures for subject areas such as data management, site monitoring, specimen collection, and document review and measures compliance
- Other Team Members
  - Follow quality procedures

Quality Reporting

- Project Team Members complete and sign checklists and other documents indicating they are following quality procedures.
- The Quality Manager report compliance and the outcome of quality procedures quarterly to the Project Manager.
- Project Managers include a summary of quality assurance procedures followed to the project sponsor.

A Quality Management Plan

- A component of the overall Project Management Plan
- Describes how quality control will be performed within the project
- Should be reviewed early in the project to ensure that decisions are based on accurate information

Summary

- Quality is an essential part of the project
- There are specific roles and responsibilities for the management of quality on the team
- Failure to perform quality control can have a direct effect on the project budget
- Quality checklists are a commonly used tool to guide quality in many areas of the project
- Compliance to written project procedures is reported to the sponsor

Questions and Comments