CHICKEN SOUP FOR THE BUSY COORDINATOR

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Traits of a Good Clinical Research Coordinator

Scenario

Miss X wants to know how to be a good Clinical Research Coordinator (CRC). A good coordinator plays a crucial role in the successful execution in clinical trials. Here are some key traits that are often associated with an effective Clinical Research/Trial Coordinator or Research Assistant (RA).

- **Organizational Skills**: Coordination in clinical research/trial is crucial. It involves managing multiple tasks, timelines, and priorities. One must have strong organizational skills to keep track of various aspect of the study that includes participant recruitment, scheduling and regulatory compliance.
- **Time management:** Clinical research/trial often involves tight timelines. A CRC/RA should be able to manage time efficiently, meet deadlines, and keep the study progressing according to the established timeline.
- **Attention to study details**: Clinical research/trial involves meticulous documentation and adherence to the study protocol. A good CRC/RA need to pay close attention to the detail to ensure accuracy in data collection, entry and reporting.
- **Problem-Solving Skills:** Clinical research/trial may encounter unexpected challenges. The ability to identify issues and develop effective solutions is crucial for maintaining the integrity of the study and addressing any obstacles that may arise.
- **Good communication Skills**: Communication is very important. Effective communication is critical for interacting with the study participants, investigators, sponsors and other team members. A CRC/RA should be able to convey information clearly and professionally, both in writing and verbally.
- **Patient-Centred approach:** Interacting with study participants requires empathy, sensitivity, and a patient-centred approach. A good CRC/RA understands the importance of participant comfort, informed consent, and ongoing communication throughout the study.
- **Team Player:** Clinical research/trial is a collaborative effort involving various professionals, including investigators, sponsors, monitors, and other CRC/RAs. Being a team player and collaborating effectively with others is important for the success of the study.
- **Adaptability:** Research environments can be dynamic, and changes may be necessary due to unforeseen circumstances. The ability to adapt to changes and remain flexible is valuable for a CRC/RA.
- **Regulatory knowledge**: To be familiar with the local regulation (i.e., HSA requirements governing clinical trial, HBRA requirements governing human biomedical research, IRBs' and Institutions' requirements governing research) and those set forth by the International Conference on Harmonisation (ICH) Good Clinical Practice (GCP). Such knowledge ensures that the study is conducted in compliance with the stipulated regulations.
- **Ethical conduct:** Adherence to IRB standards is paramount in clinical research/trial. CRC/RAs must prioritize participant safety, confidentiality, and the integrity of the research process. Understanding and following IRB guidelines and SOPs are essential.
- **Continuous learning:** The field of clinical research is constantly evolving with new technologies, methodologies, and regulations. A proactive approach to continuous learning and staying updated on industry trends is a characteristic of a successful clinical research/trial coordinator/RA.

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