Best Practices for Biostatistical Consultation and Collaboration in Academic Health Centers

ACTStat 2014 Annual Meeting
August 2\textsuperscript{nd} and 3\textsuperscript{rd}
Boston, MA
Outline

• History of Manuscript
• Co-authors
• Audience and Motivation
• Topics
• Points of Consideration
• Next Steps
History of Manuscript

• Developed from the notes from the 2012 BERD Face-to-Face Breakout session “Systems, processes and personnel for providing consulting and collaboration: best practices for maximal impact”

• Manuscript currently under review
Co-Authors

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- Peter Peduzzi
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- BERD Key Function Committee
Audience and Motivation

• Biostatistical units, regardless of funding source, and their participating members
• Rapidly changing biomedical research environment
  – Emerging technologies
  – Biostatistical units getting larger and more complex
  – Decline in extramural grant support
  – Team science
Topics Covered

• Funding Sources and Mechanisms
• Providing and Prioritizing Access
• Interacting with Investigators
• Further Topics
Funding Sources and Mechanisms

• Topics:
  – Sources: Core grant, research grant, departmental, institutional
  – Mechanisms: percent effort, fee-for-service

• Recommendations:
  – effective funding model for a biostatistics consulting and collaboration unit is a hybrid structure that includes some or all of the sources and mechanisms
  – careful consideration and negotiation of budgets
  – Baseline level of institutional support is essential
Providing and Prioritizing Access

• Topics:
  – Outreach and Access
  – Factors to consider when determining prioritization
  – Project assignment

• Recommendations:
  – Processes clearly stipulated to promote a unified, consistent, equitable, and transparent system both within and outside of the unit.
  – Use of social networking sites and other emerging technologies should be explored
  – High tech approaches should be combined with effective in-person outreach methods such as meetings with departmental faculty, walk-in clinics, and design studios
Interacting with Investigators

• Topics:
  – Communication regarding funding, timing of completion of work, and authorship
  – Education/Mentorship of investigator
  – Team Science
  – Conflict Resolution

• Recommendations:
  – Funding should be discussed during the first meeting
  – All parties should agree on the scope and timing for completion of biostatistical tasks as well as authorship issues early in the process.
  – Consultations and collaborations should be viewed as opportunities for biostatisticians to mentor and educate clinicians
  – A team science approach should be taken for larger projects
Further Topics

• Tracking and evaluation of metrics
• Encouragement of methodological research
• Training to enhance communication skills
Points of Consideration

• Consultation vs. Collaboration
• Percent Effort vs. Fee-for-service
• Institutional Support
• PhD vs Master’s degree viewpoints
Next Steps

• Manuscript with our investigators as the audience
  – Address misconceptions
  – Emphasize selected best practices in more detail
  – Need to understand how investigators are dealing with similar issues we are within their own fields
  – What do we think needs to be changed about how we work with investigators?

• Other ideas?