

Best Practices for Biostatistical Consultation and Collaboration in Academic Health Centers

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INDIANA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE



INDIANA UNIVERSITY
RICHARD M. FAIRBANKS SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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

- Mimi Kim
- Peter Bacchetti
- Cynthia Davey
- Chris Lindsay
- Madhu Mazumdar
- Bob Oster
- Peter Peduzzi
- Kyle Rudser
- David Rocke
- 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?

