Careers in Clinical Research

Presenter’s Guide

Authors

Affiliations

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Contact

**Conflicts of Interest**

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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# Introduction

Thank you for supporting efforts to increase awareness about careers in clinical research! The purpose of the Careers in Clinical Research curriculum and this companion Presenter’s Guide is to provide a high-level overview of (what the lead author claims is) “the best job you never heard of,” and build awareness among students and existing health care workers of new career options. Clinical research is an opportunity for people who are committed to helping people.

## Who should use this curriculum?

This curriculum is focused on research in clinical settings and does not include community-based and public health research careers. It is most relevant for use by professionals in academic medical centers, health systems and other clinical settings in which research is conducted and for whom building a research workforce is important.

## How to use the curriculum?

Building awareness about careers in clinical research may involve a complicated process in which this curriculum is only one step. Below are some examples of how this curriculum can be used.

* Support increasing research workforce diversity – deliver Careers in Clinical Research to students attending colleges serving underrepresented rural and minority students (e.g., Tribal colleges).
* Career options for healthcare workers who may be interested in new opportunities – present a lunchtime session for medical and pharmaceutical technicians.
* Career Day – share your experience at a high school or community college career day.

Regardless of how you plan to use the Careers in Clinical Research, it is important to understand that you are likely to get questions about what interested people must do next to pursue a research career. The slide template is customizable to your situation and can help prepare you for this question.

# Before your presentation

## Understand your audience

Are audience members racially/ethnically diverse? Is English their second language? Are they high school or college students? Do they have an existing career in healthcare? Do they have experience that might be directly applied to a research career (e.g., social work, patient navigation, chaplaincy)?

The Careers in Clinical Research includes English content appropriate for a high school level and above. Photographs are intended to display diverse individuals and graphics are visually appealing without significance to specific cultures.

## Customize the content

The slide content should be customized for your audience, the local research environment, and the setting in which interested people might one day work. Here are some examples to help you customize.

* Translate the content into and deliver the presentation in the language most familiar to your audience. Let your audience know that bi- and multi-lingual research professionals are in high demand.
* Replace photographs with those that reflect your audience (e.g., specific racial/ethnic minorities, age range). People like to see their community reflected in the position they might hold one day.
* Replace graphics with those that are representative of the culture of your audience.
* List examples of local organizations that hire clinical research professionals.
* Provide specific titles and pay ranges for local job opportunities. Consider QR codes linked to jobs boards or open positions at your institution.
* Add the next steps and be specific. Contact Jamal at [email] for more information. Click this QR code to go to the Medical Center’s jobs board. Visit this website for training opportunities.

## Last, but not least

Consider whether you are likely to have the experience and insights to field questions and whether having a co-presenter with you to fill in any possible gaps would be useful.

Run through the slides in presenter mode to make sure the poll works on slide 4 and all customized content is formatted properly.

Review the following slide notes to help plan your remarks and provide context to the content on the slides.

If you have questions about the Careers in Clinical Research curriculum or the companion Presenter’s Guide, please contact XX.

Have fun!

# Slide Notes

**Introduction**

**Objectives**

* Describe Clinical Research
* Define a Clinical Trial
* Understand Different Clinical Research Roles
* Describe Opportunities in Clinical Research
* Outline the Career Outlook in the field of Clinical Research

**What is Clinical Research?**

**Poll Question:** What comes to mind when you think of clinical research?

\*Generates a Word Cloud\*

**Clinical Research**

* Clinical research is how doctors and scientists find new and better ways to prevent, diagnose and treat diseases and conditions.
* Before new medications or new devices can be marketed or used, they must first go through comprehensive research studies in people to make sure they are safe and effective.
* Clinical research trials can include new medications, medical devices, ways to diagnose diseases and ways to care for patients so they have better outcomes.
* Clinical research is different than laboratory research. It involves people who volunteer to help to better understand medicine and health.

**Field of Clinical Research: Outlook & Roles**

**Outlook**

* As a clinical research professional, you will have the opportunity to make a difference, gain valuable experience in the field of science and medicine and advance your own career.
* Clinical Research is a field with high demand and opportunity and is accessible to people with a wide range of skills, backgrounds, and education.

**Roles in Clinical Research**

* Investigators: These are doctors who provide oversight for the research study. They have special expertise in the conditions that are being researched.
* Clinical Research Coordinators: Manage the details of running a clinical trial, including scheduling participants and collecting data.
* Regulatory Coordinators: Organize the documents for review of the clinical trial by independent ethical review boards.
* Study Monitors: Review study records to verify data accuracy and compliance with clinical research rules and regulations.
* Research Scientists: Test and develop ideas and products in a laboratory setting.

**Investigator Responsibilities**

ULTIMATELY RESPONSIBLE FOR STUDY CONDUCT

* Confirm Eligibility
* Obtain Consent
* Assess Side Effects
* Adhere to Study Plan

**Clinical Research Coordinator**

* Supports, facilitates, and coordinates the daily clinical trial activities
* Plays a critical role in the conduct of the study

**Study Management**

* Communicate Requirements
* Track, document & report status updates
* Collaborate on study activities
* Participant management
* Data collection

**Daily Activities**

* Varies depending on several things, including:
  + the type and complexity of the research trials,
  + the structure of a division or department
  + and experience level of the clinical research coordinator

**Research Coordinators might also** **provide oversight or assistance for:**

* Regulatory submission & maintenance
* Budget development & billing compliance
* Study contracts & agreements
* Sample collection & processing
* Study close out & archival of records

**Who Makes a Good Clinical Research Professional?**

**Clinical Research Professionals**

* DETAILS: Managing clinical trials involves tracking and organizing a lot of data points, timelines, and milestones.
* PEOPLE: You are the face of a clinical research study, often the first and most frequent point of contact for study participants
* INTEGRITY: It is important to document everything that happens in clinical research trials and report them honestly.
* COMMUNICATION: It is important to be able to communicate well in writing and by speaking with a lot of different types of people
* ORGANIZATION: You should be able to organize your time and work well and independently

**Clinical Research Professionals (2)**

* People with backgrounds as medical assistants, health care technicians, and in nonscientific fields can all make excellent research professionals!
* Many clinical research roles don't require an advanced degree.
* There is room to grow in multiple directions, depending on your interests, including data, clinical, administrative, or regulatory roles.

**Clinical Research (summary slide)**

* Scientific discovery in medicine and medical care
* New ways to prevent, diagnose or treat medical conditions
* All research professionals are crucial to the success of clinical research trials.
* Clinical research professionals are involved in every stage of clinical trials

**Who is Hiring?**

Pursuing a career in clinical research provides opportunities at medical centers, clinics, non-profit organizations, and pharmaceutical companies.

**Where To Look**

* Local hospitals, clinics, medical centers
* Pharmaceutical companies
* Contract research organizations
* Staffing agencies
* Nonprofit foundations
* Job boards, including Indeed & LinkedIn

**Local Opportunities**

*Indicate the institutions and/or job titles of open positions with a few bullets with additional information. If the experience and skills level of your audience aligns with open positions, consider inserting a QR code or link for more information. It may also be useful to provide very basic instructions about how to apply (e.g., update your resume to highlight the job requirements, upload to the website).*

**Earning Potential**

**Local Earning Breakdown**

*Compile job titles and salary ranges of positions with different experience and leadership levels (e.g., entry to senior leaders) for which research coordination skills are relevant. Titles and salary ranges should be reflective of those at your institution or others in your geographical area. These examples do not need to reflect open positions, rather, a range of opportunities that could emanate from research coordination.*

**Key Takeaways**

* Clinical research professionals make a difference in the lives of study participants and the community.
* They drive the discovery of new ways to diagnose, treat or cure diseases and medical conditions.
* There are career opportunities at all phases and levels in clinical research from early scientific development, research coordination, data analysis, monitoring and administration, entry level to senior leadership roles.
* Careers in clinical research are accessible: many roles don't require advanced degrees or a scientific background.

Other possible messages to integrate

* Statement about what it’s like to work for your institution
* Information about your job, how long you’ve been there, what motivates you to do this work