ITHS Institute of Translational Health Sciences
ACCELERATING RESEARCH. IMPROVING HEALTH.

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True Blood: A Tracking System for the Identification of Sample Collection Barriers

Description of the Problem

This study involved obtaining research blood samples during a scheduled clinical draw. Clinic schedules were screened to identify patients with the diagnoses of interest. The coordinator would then obtain consent from patients during the clinic appointment. After consent, the patient would have a clinical blood draw, and the researcher would collect additional blood to use in the study.

Although there were 94 eligible patients with scheduled appointments, many of whom previously consented for this study, only 26 research samples were collected (far fewer than expected). It was not clear why this number was so low, or what the barriers were to collecting samples.

Objectives

- Better understand why fewer samples were collected than anticipated
- Identify barriers between clinicians, research coordinators, and clinic patients
- Increase the number of samples collected

Acknowledgements
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BEST PRACTICE:

Implement a system to track eligible patients and enrollment and sample collection outcomes

Methods

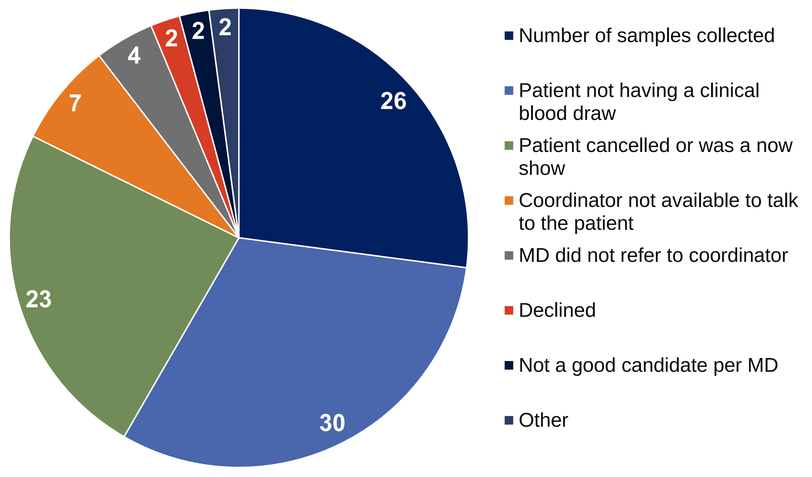
We created a worksheet to track the number of samples collected, eligible patients, and reasons why samples were not collected. At the end of each clinic day the outcome for each patient identified on prescreening as eligible was recorded. The following data was collected:

- Number of patients eligible
- Number of samples collected
- Patient not having a clinical blood draw
- Patient cancelled or was a no show
- Coordinator not available to talk to the patient
- MD did not refer patient to the coordinator
- Patient declined
- Not a good candidate per MD
- Other

Results

- 28% of patients determined to be eligible from pre-screening had samples drawn
- 30% of patients did not have clinical blood drawn, which was far lower than the PI expected
- 24% of patients cancelled or were a no-show on the day of the appointment, which was greater than expected
- Having quantitative data allowed the PI to establish more reasonable expectations for data collection by the research lab

Outcomes of 94 anticipated blood samples



Discussion

- Tracking helps identify true barriers and bottlenecks to recruitment and data collection
- This type of tracking process can be translated to other studies