Avoiding Pitfalls in Implementing Your Project

Begin With the End in Mind

- You must know what outcome you want at the end and a projected completion time frame
  - What is your projected medium for your work
- Starting with your end date, back up each event based on the anticipated time each phase requires
- With careful preparation, contingency plans, and a good attitude, roadblocks can be prevented or overcome

Avoiding Key Trouble Spots

- Plan the writing
  - Who is writing what
  - Account for edits and revisions
- Estimate time for data analysis
- Consider how long data collection will take
- Plan enough time for patient recruitment
- Allow time for Internal Review Board (IRB) Review and Approval

Making Sure You Are Aware of Deadlines

- What is your deadline and goal
  - What steps or milestones are necessary along the way to keep you on track
- Where are you trying to showcase your work
  - Poster and podium presentation abstracts are typically due 4-6 months before the meeting
    - Allows for peer review and selection of projects that are appropriate and meet requirements
    - Be aware of specific criteria:
      - Completed vs. in-progress work

Develop Materials to Aid Implementation

- Detail roles and responsibilities of committee members
- Policy and procedure manual
- Data collection forms and training for consistency
  - Decide how to best organize data information and ensure meets IRB and HIPAA requirements for privacy
- Develop data sheets or diagrams to help you see the story your data is telling
  - Connect your results to your study objectives

Recruit Participants Wisely

- Never cut corners in recruiting participants
  - Ensure informed consent meets IRB requirements, particularly in protected populations or surveys
- Do no underestimate the time needed to identify and recruit patients
  - Ensure all investigators are trained on appropriate processed
- Consider external validity of your patient population

Safeguard Your Data

- Back up data regularly and store in accordance with IRB requirements
- Have another investigator double-check all transcribed data
  - Double-enter data and compare the two sets for discrepancies
- Never fabricate data
- Maintain a coded list of transcription codes if applicable

Respect Patient Confidentiality

- Do not use patient names for data collection or presentation
- Do not collect data without informed consent
- Utilize appropriate non-identifiable codes for participant data
  - Use coded data in reports

Conclusion

- Chances of having a successful and publishable project are enhanced by planning for potential pitfalls
- Train all investigators for consistency
- Maintain data in protected format
- Anticipating the problems discussed and carefully planning how a study will be implemented can make the research process rewarding