

Our Quirky Study Team

By Joél Marie Barra

Clinical study teams can involve numerous personnel, each team member playing an essential role and each having his or her own quirks. Our study team reflects the nature of ophthalmology studies. Despite our quirks, we perform well on about 10 concurrent studies. Our team includes the following members:

Principal Investigator. Our evaluating physician serves as principal investigator. He is enthusiastic about clinical trials, hands-on, and always available, but he will probably never accept the importance of proper (ALCOA) documentation.

Injecting Physician. Our injecting physician has excellent technique and is good at documentation (seldom a physician's strong point). He never misses an appointment, but usually shows up late.

Injecting Technician. Our unblinded injecting technician is responsible for injection prep. She is very organized, an essential trait for her role. In the office, she is relaxed and friendly, but if something is out of place or soiled in the injection room, expect fireworks.

Angiographer. Our angiographer performs his work with complete competence, but does not consider research part of his job and acts a bit put-upon.

Visual Acuity Examiner. Our visual acuity examiner is very precise in her exams and rarely makes a mistake, but don't ask her to do something in the wrong tone of voice.

Study Coordinator. Our study coordinator knows every protocol like the back of her hand. The subjects love her. If needed, she is always willing to stay late and come in on weekends. She works hard to make sure everyone is doing everything correctly and on time, yet her lack of organization means she has to work twice as hard to get the job done.

Director of Clinical Operations. As the Director of Clinical Operations, I visit the research site one day each week. I have a lot of clinical research experience and keep the trains running on time, but some might consider me too high-strung and demanding.

No matter your role in clinical research, you are probably a member of team with its own unique collection of personalities. Until medical science comes up with a cure for the common quirk, we all need to work together, leveraging our strengths and laughing at our quirks.

Author

Joél Marie Barra is Director of Clinical Operations at American Institute of Research. Contact her at 1.213.481.7142 or jbarra@airesearch.us.