Reducing Semiannual Review Burden Using the One Page Project Management Tool (OPPM)

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Problem Statement

Semiannual Program Reviews and Facility Inspections (Semiannual Reviews) require considerable effort from multiple stakeholders and are often a significant source of self-imposed administrative burden.

Problem: At Seattle Children’s Research Institute, Semiannual Reviews and inspection follow-up has taken up to 200 days, due to lack of standard administrative processes, visibility and ownership of those processes, and efficient interdepartmental coordination.

Goal: Substantially reduce the time taken for Semiannual Reviews without requiring specialized electronic programs or financial cost.

What is an OPPM?

One Page Project Manager (OPPM)

The OPPM is a project management and communication tool that tracks major tasks, objectives, ownership, and affiliated metrics for project execution in a simple one-page document.

What are the Costs of Using an OPPM?

OPPM Templates are available online for free or low cost, typically in Excel format. Using the template does not require additional technology, training, or personnel resources.

How can the OPPM help with Semiannual Review and Facility Inspections?

- Simplifies the twice yearly review into a discrete, trackable project in an easy to visualize format
- Helps calculate turn around times (TAT) and forecasts due dates to make sure your Semiannual Review will be completed on schedule
- Alerts multiple stakeholders at once when milestones and tasks are not met

Steps to creating the OPPM:

1. Identify Semiannual Review “Major Tasks” and categorize into a custom institutional template (Excel, above)
2. Establish project Milestones based on your program’s priorities
3. Set target completion date (e.g. end of December) and Milestone deadlines
4. Consult responsible parties/stakeholders (e.g. IACUC Chair, Institutional Official, Administrator) and delegate tasks
5. Implement and maintain a weekly update schedule
6. Share the OPPM with stakeholders involved to allow for independent maintenance and status updates
7. Use the table’s forecasting features to set or revise target date goals for the next Semiannual Review

Using and Understanding the Tool

- Accountability assigned to various stakeholders involved in the review
- Risks’ status identified with color indicators
- Moving red line indicates current date
- Project milestones marked in blue boxes
- Turn around time (TAT) from multiple milestones can be accurately estimated and analyzed

Improvement

For the two Semiannual Reviews in 2015 using the OPPM tool, TAT time was 43 calendar days on average, compared to an average of 137 calendar days before implementing the tool.

Significant Reduction in Semiannual Review Times

After implementation of the OPPM tool in 2015, the average turn-around time (TAT) dropped from 137 to 43 calendar days, half the time as the 2014 reviews and three times faster than the previous two-year average. No additional tools or employee labor hours beyond those necessary to create the OPPM were required.

Maintaining the Standard

The success of the OPPM tool relies on all accountable groups actively participating. Discipline to the standards is key to maintaining the tool’s usefulness.

The OPPM must be visible to stakeholders involved, and individuals across departments must agree to regularly update and report on their assigned tasks.

Use your data! Take advantage of the data you collect to find new ways to analyze your metrics. Identify roadblocks and Major Task steps where your review process gets “stuck”.

Make your OPPM useful -- customize and update your tool to collect the data most important to your institution.

Resources

Template OPPMs and more information can be found on the OPPM International website: https://www.oppmi.com/

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About Seattle Children’s Research Institute

Located in downtown Seattle’s biotech corridor, Seattle Children’s Research Institute is pushing the boundaries of medical research to find cures for pediatric diseases and improve outcomes for children all over the world. Internationally recognized investigators and staff at the Research Institute are advancing new discoveries in cancer, genetics, immunology, pathobiology, infectious diseases, injury prevention, bioethics, and more. Working in partnership with Seattle Children’s Hospital and Seattle Children’s Research Foundation, the Research Institute brings together leading minds in pediatric research to provide patients with the best care possible. For more information visit www.seattlechildrens.org/research.