Recruiting, training, and retaining IRB members are common challenges for many institutions. As a quality improvement effort, the identification of members’ perceptions as related to their IRB service generates useful factors to be considered when strategizing about these aspects of IRB membership.

**WHAT WE LEARNED**

**IRB DETERMINATION**
- The study was determined to be exempt research at both institutions.

**OBJECTIVES**
- Identify IRB members’ perceptions about their IRB service in terms of satisfactions and challenges
- Describe perceptions of IRB members who review predominately biomedical research (VCU) and social/behavioral research (Penn State, excluding College of Medicine)

**METHODS**
- Descriptive, survey-based study
- Survey was a self-evaluation tool distributed annually
- Data for this research collected in 2011
- IRB members completed the survey N=90 (VCU = 59, Penn State = 31) Included alternates and convened/full board members (did not include IRB program staff)

**RESULTS**

**Top-ranked Satisfactions**
- **LEARNING** in general and specific learning in
  - Research ethics
  - Research in other fields
- **GAINING** a better understanding of federal regulations
- **SOCIAL SATISFACTIONS**
  - Viewed as IRB expert with peers
  - Helping investigators conduct better research
  - Meeting and working with new colleagues

**Top-ranked Challenges**
- **FINDING TIME** to conduct reviews
- **LEARNING and APPLYING**
  - Federal regulations
  - IRB policies and procedures
- **DOCUMENTING** reviews

**FACTORS THAT MAY AFFECT MEMBER SATISFACTION**
- Education is a challenge, but IRB members want to learn:
  - The institution provides focused education to IRB members regarding application of federal regulations.
  - The amount, timing, and methods of delivering education/training are appropriate.
  - Criteria for approval are referenced regularly and interpreted consistently.
  - Quality of orientation and the length of service are considered as factors affecting education/training needs.

- **Time** to conduct reviews:
  - Reviews are distributed equitably among IRB reviewers.
  - Protocols are well-prepared.
  - IRB members are granted release time for IRB service.
  - Members have enough experience/training to conduct reviews in a reasonable amount of time.

- **Recruitment** factors to consider:
  - Social satisfaction factors may improve recruitment in biomedical IRBs
  - Opportunity to help the institution through service and compliance may improve recruitment in social/behavioral IRBs

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Addresses AAHRPP Standard 1-5 (quality improvement activities) and Standard II.1.B. (periodically evaluates IRB membership)