Noncompliance among researchers is a concern for Human Research Protections Programs (HRPPs). While processing applications for continuing review, IRBs may discover study teams have:

- Used expired or unstamped informed consent documents;
- Failed to add study staff to the IRB application;
- Failed to report serious adverse events; or
- Implemented changes to the research without IRB approval

**Educating Study Teams:**

- The USF HRPP education and QA/QI programs joined forces to expand education initiatives to reduce noncompliance
- Focus was on partnering with researchers, not penalizing them
- Instituted half day study team retreats on topics such as ethics in human subjects research, serious adverse event reporting, policies and procedures, and ways to avoid noncompliance
- Retreats were interactive, incorporated skits, held in convenient locations for study teams, and satisfied human subjects protection education requirements

**Outcomes:**

The increased efforts of the programs resulted in a significant increase in education course attendees from 2012 to 2013. In 2013 the QA/QI Program conducted routine audits which provided study teams with education pertaining to IRB policies, federal regulations, and good clinical practice and saw a reduction in IRB requests for for-cause audits.

**Discussion:**

When embarking on this type of program it is important to recognize that study teams are anxious when notified that they will be “audited.” It may be helpful to use the term *evaluation* to let them know you are there to help. Study teams are often unaware they are committing noncompliance with HRPP policies or regulations. A robust education program tailored to the needs of the research community can significantly improve compliance and reduce for-cause audits.

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