Results and Discussion

Delays in opening clinical trials adversely affect patient care. New Mexico Cancer Care Alliance’s (NMCCA) / University of New Mexico Comprehensive Cancer Center (UNMCCC) average time from clinical working group (CWG) review to trial opening is 33 weeks. Shortening this time will expedite patient access to novel therapies.

Goal: Identify where delays occur in the process and create strategies to shorten the time of trial activation without creating excessive burden to staff and financial resources.

Primary aims:
1. To define the average time a protocol stays within each timeline for clinical trial initiation
2. To identify the timeline where an intervention will make the most impact in shortening start-up time
3. Through an ASCO driven project, create an intervention with the goal of decreasing this time by 50% by December 31, 2018

To effectively implement the shift in the new workflow, beginning February 2018, strict deadlines for the 3 priority processes will be established for each new trial submitted to IRB.

Process interventions include:
1. New study feasibility questionnaires will be given to sponsors to identify barriers earlier.
2. Template emails have been drafted for the regulatory coordinators to communicate more efficiently at the time of PRMC approval.
3. A template for timeline reporting to the clinical working groups has been created and mandatory deadlines will be established and tracked.

Detailed analysis of 2017 data of newly opened trials at NMCCA/UNMCCC showed that protocols spent the longest amount of time from IRB approval to open active. The identification of this delay is the critical first step in developing strategies to shorten time to trial initiation at our institution.

This process was a constructive exercise creating a positive team experience that encouraged collaborative problem solving.