
Community Based HIV/AIDS Clinical Research: Implications For The Research Nurse In A Changing Business Model

Background: Community Research Initiative New England (CRINE) is a community-based, nonprofit organization that has been devoted to HIV/AIDS clinical research since 1989. CRINE has contributed to data that has led to approval of most of the HIV/AIDS treatments that are in use today. CRINE has conducted more than 200 research studies including over 50 studies created by their own research physicians.

Purpose: The purpose of this poster is to show the innovative ways in which CRINE has changed its model to stay economically viable, and the challenges this brings to the role of the research nurse.

Practice: HIV/AIDS Clinical research has changed dramatically over the past 3-5 years. Increased costs have resulted in Pharmaceutical companies reducing the number of new drugs brought to market. The desperation for new agents has also eased, as there are now 30+ effective antiretroviral medications at our disposal. The Pharma emphasis is now more focused on vaccines and existing drug co-formulations. New drug development is much reduced. Despite this, there continues to be numerous scientific questions begging to be answered. These include long-term effects of ARV medications on metabolic, adherence and resistance, questions regarding treatment interruption, drug interactions and symptom management. Many of these are not studies typically funded and/or run by pharmaceutical companies. In order to answer some of these questions CRINE has begun to develop its own protocols that ask questions that are important to their community of providers and consumers. In order to adequately enroll these 15 – 80 participant studies CRINE has taken over the role of sponsor and created its own small network of sites throughout the country. The role of the research nurse has had to expand to include many more management skills.

Conclusions: In order to continue to provide community based HIV/AIDS research trials small nonprofit agencies need to alter their model. This means more diverse and eclectic responsibilities for the nurses who conduct the studies.

Implications for Practice: The role of clinical research nurse in a community based research clinic will need to evolve to include more roles as a way to maintain economic viability.