



Association of Academic Health Centers
Leading institutions that serve society

For Immediate Release
 February 28, 2008

News Release

Contact: Elaine Rubin (202) 265-9600

New Self-Assessment Tool Can Improve Clinical Research Administration

Transformational Curve Detailed in Latest Brief from Association of Academic Health Centers

WASHINGTON, Feb. 28 - A new assessment tool designed to improve or enhance administration and management of clinical research in academic health centers is detailed in *The Transformational Curve: A Management Tool for Clinical Research Structures*, the latest publication by the Association of Academic Health Centers (AAHC).

The tool, described by the authors as one way to “create a strong and sustainable infrastructure to support the academic health center research mission,” can assist academic health center leaders to: (1) track organizational progress in identifying risks and weaknesses in clinical research infrastructure; (2) assess and align organizational strengths; (3) review and analyze organizational resources; and (4) identify the vital elements needed to advance the quality of clinical research and create the optimal state for administrative operations at the institution.

“With this valuable tool, regardless of institutional size, research portfolio, or governance structure, academic health center leaders can assess the entire institutional landscape of processes, systems, and personnel involved in clinical research, especially clinical trials, and thus ensure effective management and systems optimization,” said AAHC President Steven A. Wartman, MD, PhD. “The approach is based on a culture of accountability that will benefit the institution and the public.”

The brief describes the four foundations of sound administrative infrastructure -- policy, progress, people, and technology -- and reveals the key agents of change for a systems-approach to clinical research: (1) centralized policy and shared governance; (2) consistent and competitive research discounts; (3) a centralized data repository; (4) auditable management controls; (5) skill, competency, and productivity assessment; (6) focused training and education; and (7) integrated IT solutions.

These seven agents of change were then translated into “milestone events,” or the core operational events that can shape change. To optimize existing resources and harmonize institutional policies, academic health center leaders can use the “milestone events” to navigate the Transformational Curve, which highlights a rational order of processes and can point to gaps in the research infrastructure.

This new tool emphasizes the need for inclusiveness for all stakeholders within the institution along with program integration and sustainability. The ultimate outcome is the development of an improved future state for clinical research.

#

The AAHC is a national non-profit association dedicated to advancing the nation's health and well-being through the vigorous leadership academic health centers.