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Enhancing Cross-functional Partnership in Early Oncology Clinical Development: A Practical Guide for Biostatisticians

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Wei Quan
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Dr. Wei Quan is a statistician with expertise in medicine and statistics. After earning her MD and working as a neurologist, she pursued a postgraduate degree in Data Science and Machine Learning at Imperial College London, where she developed robust skills in integrating statistical rigor into medical research. She now works as a Senior Statistician in AstraZeneca's Early Oncology Biometrics department. As a statistician, Dr. Quan is passionate about creating innovative while interpretable statistical frameworks for clinical trials, specializing in survival analysis, Bayesian methods, and data visualization. Beyond clinical projects, Dr. Quan is dedicated to enhancing cross-functional collaboration and empowering statisticians within interdisciplinary teams.

(Note for conference committee: We have two potential presenters who may co-present, or alternatively, one of them may present individually. The final arrangement will be confirmed at a later date.)

Laura Barker
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Laura Barker is an Associate Director of Statistics at AstraZeneca, with almost a decade of experience in oncology drug development. Her expertise spans both early and late-phase clinical trials, where she has played a pivotal role in clinical trial design and statistical analysis. Laura holds a Master's degree in Medical Statistics from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

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Single topic, multi-speaker session, Workshop or Single presentation submission

A single presentation/poster

Single presentation or poster submission

In the evolving drug-development space, the need for effective cross-functional collaboration has never been greater [Pomann et al. 2021]. As part of the early development clinical project team, together with clinicians and other functions, our collective goal is to identify safe and effective treatments, at the right dose for the right patient. Biostatisticians play a crucial role during study design, decision-making, analysis and reporting processes. Enhancing communication and achieving operational efficiency are essential to navigating the complexities of early phase drug development. By fostering innovation and maintaining a growth mindset, we aim to empower the leading role of biostatisticians throughout the cross-functional collaboration lifecycle.

In AstraZeneca Oncology Biometrics, initiatives have been launched to enhance collaboration across the lifecycle. For example, cross-functional workstreams bring together multi-disciplinary representatives to promote novel statistical methodologies. To increase knowledge-sharing and facilitate broader application of statistical methods, a cross-functional working group, sponsored by early Oncology Biometrics and co-sponsored by Early Oncology Clinical, has been leading interdisciplinary trainings. These include engaging workshops and panel discussions on various biometrics topics, aimed at enhancing overall collaboration and innovation.

We will begin by introducing cross-functional collaboration, highlighting the critical role of biostatisticians in fostering partnerships and ensuring project success. We will address common challenges and explore potential opportunities for biostatisticians to lead and innovate. From the statistician's perspective, we will discuss general considerations for leading cross-functional collaboration, sharing insights and strategies that have been adopted. Through case studies, we will share practical examples of how cross-functional initiatives have been implement.