

IMPROVING CRO PERFORMANCE WITH STANDARDIZED METRICS

The benefits of standardized performance metrics are being realized among the Biotechnology / Pharmaceutical Research and Development (R&D) industry. Not only do metrics identify opportunities for performance improvement and change negative practices and behaviors, but they also increase learning and monitor process performance. According to industry feedback, the need for standardized performance metrics is high.^{1, 2} Data indicate that up to 93% of Sponsors and 83% of Service Providers among Contract Research Organizations (CROs) have experienced a growing demand for metrics within their organizations.² Similarly, 100% of Central Laboratory Sponsors support the implementation of standardized performance metrics, and 75% of them have projected that their Service Providers would support this implementation as well. Imaging organizations are no exception to these trends and could benefit from implementing standardized performance metrics into their daily operations. Yet, despite these favorable statistics, only a fraction of the industry currently utilizes standardized performance metrics, indicating an obvious gap between their need and implementation.

BRIDGING THE GAP

The Metrics Champion Consortium (MCC), a not-for-profit, multidisciplinary organization, was formed to bridge the gap between the need for and utilization of standardized performance metrics. Through the experience and expertise of Consortium members, who include representatives from leading Biotechnology / Pharmaceutical and Service Provider organizations, the MCC works to develop and implement actionable standardized performance metrics for all areas of the industry – on an industry-wide basis – to increase productivity and improve utilization of resources between Sponsors and Service Providers. To date, the MCC has successfully guided Sponsors and Central Lab and ECG Service Providers toward this end, and it is now furthering its reach by working with CROs. The MCC Board of Directors is seeking qualified individuals from Sponsor and Service Provider organizations to participate in the standardized CRO Performance Metrics Initiative, which is set to launch in mid 2007.

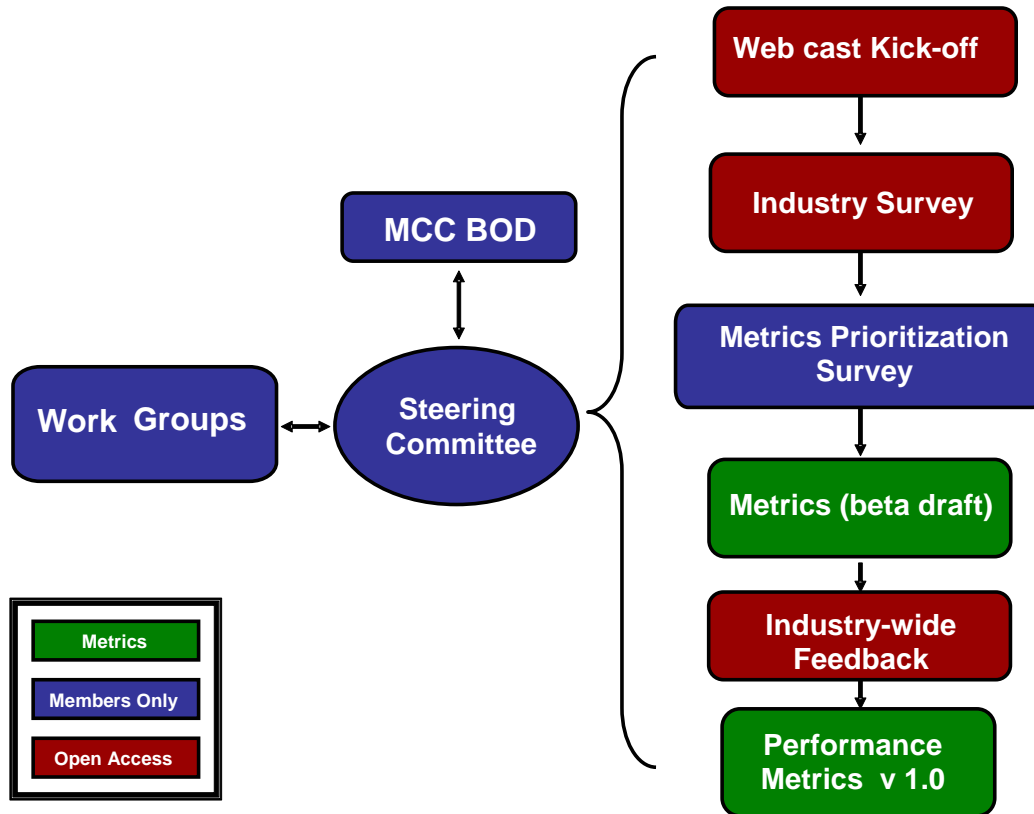
DEVELOPING ACTIONABLE CRO METRICS

In line with what has proven effective with its previous metrics initiatives, the MCC's development of the standardized CRO Performance Metrics will be based on its basic Development Process Model (Figure 1). Details of the CRO Initiative will be left to the expertise of the CRO Steering Committee and Work Groups, which will be comprised of representatives from Sponsor and Service Provider organizations within the CRO arena.

The Work Groups, guided by the Steering Committee and in accordance with the MCC's Policies and Mission Statement, will develop a draft set of performance metrics, then prioritize and expand upon them (e.g., implementing definitions, examples, formulas, etc. as needed) to develop a beta version of the standardized CRO Performance Metrics.

Once the beta version has been compiled, it will be released for industry-wide feedback, which will be incorporated as seen fit by the Steering Committee and Work Groups to evolve the draft into a usable version – Version 1.0. Once industry members have had an opportunity to implement Version 1.0 into their operations, further feedback will be requested to ensure that the metrics are successfully measuring the imaging information that they were designed to capture, resulting in actionable outcomes. Modifications will be incorporated, as necessary, for future versions.

Figure 1. Metrics Development Process Model



MOVING FROM MODEL TO PRACTICE

The MCC's standardized performance metrics are evolving from model to practice as industry members become familiar with and adopt them into their operations. Joining the MCC allows Sponsor and Service Provider organizations the opportunity to shape the standardized performance metrics that are in such high demand and that will ultimately affect the success or failure of the industry's bottom line, including sound business practices and decision-making processes, as well as successful operations management and cost utility.

For more information on the MCC, the available opportunities for involvement with its standardized CRO Performance Metrics Initiative, and the benefits of implementing standardized performance metrics within your organization, please visit www.metricschampion.org.

¹ Metrics Champion Consortium. *Central Laboratory Performance Metrics Sponsor Feedback Survey*. October 31, 2006.

² Metrics Champion Consortium. *Implementing Performance Metrics to Drive Time, Cost and Quality & Enhance Partnership Performance Workshop Survey*. Taken and presented at the 16th Annual Partnerships with CROs and Other Outsourcing Providers Meeting. April 10, 2007; Orlando, Florida.