What is the NM research alignment process?
The research alignment process, facilitated by the Northwestern Medicine (NM) Office of Research, provides researchers with a key contact and a standardized process to engage NM partners and resources for research and to receive accurate budget information. This process applies to research that will be conducted at NM and includes (1) intervention(s) requiring IS/Epic Application Teams to build new and/or optimize the electronic medical record (EMR) and/or (2) work requiring commitments for Quality, Registries, and/or Performance effort to facilitate completion of aims.

NM Health System Clinical Collaboratives (HSCCs) are utilized to conduct the alignment process for research including IS/Epic changes as they are tasked with alignment and prioritization of requests across NM.

What is a Health System Clinical Collaborative (HSCC)?
The NM Health System Clinical Collaboratives (HSCCs) mission is to advance the safety, effectiveness, and efficiency of patient care to support health system clinical integration. The HSCCs are clinically focused, specialty-specific, physician lead, multidisciplinary work groups.

- All HSCCs have representatives from system functions including IT/Epic, Informatics, Analytics, Quality, and Performance Improvement (PI)
- HSCC members are responsible for:
  - Reaching consensus
  - Prioritizing requests brought to the HSCC (ex. projects, Epic, and analytics)
  - Disseminating information to local leadership and colleagues

Who are the HSCC members and what are their responsibilities?
HSCC membership consists of the following groups:

- **Co-Leaders**: 1 academic medical center (AMC) and 1 regional physician, nurse, or pharmacist
- **3 members from each hospital**: MD/DO, APPs, nurse/administrative leaders
- **System Functions Members**: Informatics, IT, Analytics, Quality, PI
- **Facilitator**: Designated person to help facilitate the HSCC meetings and prep meetings

When does a researcher need to start the process?
We recommend that researchers reach out to the Office of Research at research@nm.org as soon as they have an idea for research that will be conducted at NM. The Office of Research will facilitate connection to appropriate clinical and operational leaders who can provide feedback on how to ensure NM and research goals are aligned. We recommend that researchers initiate the research alignment process at least 3 months prior to a proposal deadline to ensure sufficient time for any clarifications needed and to fully scope the request.

How should a researcher get started?
Email research@nm.org with a brief overview of the research aim and the requested NM resources to get started. Based on the research resource needs, next steps will be provided.

- If your research includes Intervention(s) requiring IS/Epic Application Teams to build new and/or optimize the electronic medical record (EMR) (examples of EMR changes that need to be submitted regardless of number of clinicians impacted: order sets, best practice alerts, smart texts, flow sheet, new technology) then you will be connected to the Research and Development team to scope the request and initiate the HSCC review process.
- If your research requires Quality, Registries, and/or Performance Improvement effort to facilitate completion of aims, then you will be connected with the appropriate individual to discuss the request and scope resource needs to inclusion in the budget.

Please send comments or questions to research@nm.org
HSCC Research Alignment High Level Process Map

Pre-award – Initiate 3+ months prior to grant submission

Post-award – Standard HSCC Process

Please send comments or questions to research@nm.org