THREE PROJECTS - ONE GOAL

The Human Subjects Division (HSD) at the University of Washington is undertaking a multi-year portfolio of projects named "Compass". These projects are all in support of replacing HSD's old paper-based system with an electronic IRB system named "Zipline".

Compass is a foundational component of the Researcher Portal: a long-term Office of Research initiative to provide a single web portal where all research related activities are managed.

ZIPLINE GO-LIVE DATE!

HSD is excited to announce that the go-live date for Zipline is May 31, 2016.

Implementation ("rollout") will occur in phases. In Phase 1, Zipline will be rolled out to one IRB and a few of the departments it reviews. It will quickly be expanded to all of the departments reviewed by that IRB. Zipline users during this pilot phase will be solicited for feedback to identify any needed changes to training, forms, processes, or technologies prior to full campus implementation.

After any necessary improvements and changes are incorporated from the pilot phase, Zipline will be rolled out to the rest of campus and the other IRBs in a sequential manner.

DELTA: More experts, more expertise. Completed July 1, 2015. HSD staff have undergone intense training in the regulations to facilitate the review of human subjects research applications. Office staffing structure and distribution of departments have been optimized.

STREAMLINE: Sensible simplification. Many processes have been simplified, including the External IRB (WIRB) process. We will soon start feedback and testing activities of our significantly revised main application form (13-11).

ZIPLINE: A clear path. User acceptance testing is in its final phases, and the last iteration of customizations and configurations of the Zipline system is complete. Go-live is set for May 31, 2016.
A PHILOSOPHY SHIFT

Most of HSD's forms currently guide the user through a regulatory-based decision-making process. They often ask the researcher to read the requirements of a particular regulation, and then determine whether it applies to his or her research.

In the Streamline project, the burden and anxiety of interpreting the regulations will be removed as much as possible from the researcher.

- HSD staff will make the regulatory determinations.
- HSD staff will exercise their regulatory expertise.
- Forms will be streamlined and consolidated.

Researchers won't have to decide which form to use based on how they think their research will be reviewed - nor experience the slowdown that happens if they choose incorrectly.

- SOPs will be simple.

Guidance, instructions, and definitions will be broken out into different documents to allow the SOPs to focus on the operating procedures.

COMPASS PROJECT TIMELINE: The project timeline has been adjusted to account for milestones reached, and the newly established rollout date.

ROLLOUT - WHAT'S NEXT?

- The Zipline project team continues to establish and refine rollout specifics such as detailed rollout timelines and department sequences.
- A robust training and support plan for researchers, IRB members and HSD staff is in development.
- Planning is also underway for establishing the process by which current paper-based studies will be converted to Zipline and which studies will be required to convert.
- Clear and frequent communication about Zipline and its rollout has begun.

COMPASS - A LOOK BACK

HSD began the Compass portfolio of projects in December of 2014. The need to move away from a burdensome paper process and to implement an electronic IRB system was certainly the impetus to begin this suite of projects, but we realized that introducing an electronic system without first re-structuring our office organization, changing our philosophy on forms and emphasizing the regulatory expertise of our staff, would simply layer new technology on top of out-dated processes.

Our staffing model has been reorganized to be more nimble, and less siloed. Staff have undergone an intense few months of regulatory training. Many business processes within our office have undergone streamlining, such as the external IRB process.

And now, we've determined a “go-live” date for Zipline our main application form is being modernized and remodeled for clarity and efficiency, and a robust training and communication plan is underway.

Many thanks to the research community for your patience as we continue to move towards our goals of reducing administrative burden, creating a positive experience for campus, and maintaining high compliance standards.