

JTF Biannual Global Meeting Summary

June 22, 2026

The Joint Task Force for Clinical Trial Competency (JTF) held its biannual global meeting to present major updates to its competency framework and gather stakeholder feedback to inform the next version (targeted for 2027). The session focused on two primary initiatives: the Patient Partner Project (JTF-P3) and the revision of Domain 6 (Data Management, Informatics, and Statistics).

Key Highlights

1. Strategic Direction of the JTF Framework

- The JTF framework, a globally adopted competency model for clinical research professionals, continues to evolve in response to changes in the clinical research landscape.
- Version 3.1 is currently in use; development toward Version 4.0 emphasizes inclusivity, technological advancement, and continuous refinement through global collaboration.
- The framework maintains its structure of eight domains with competencies defined across three proficiency levels (fundamental, skilled, and advanced), guided by Bloom's taxonomy.

2. JTF Patient Partner Project (JTF-P3)

- Patient engagement is positioned as a **core competency**, requiring both research professionals and patient partners to develop new collaborative skills.
- JTF-P3 integrates patient and community partners as **active collaborators** across all aspects of clinical research, including protocol design, informed consent, and study execution. Patient partners, as collaborators in the leadership of the study, are not to be confused with study participants. It is important to distinguish these very different roles in the language used to describe them.



Joint Task Force for Clinical Trial Competency (JTF)

- Developed through a **global, multi-organization collaboration** (MRCT Center/JTF, CANTRAIN, EUPATI), the project embeds patient partnership competencies throughout the framework rather than partitioning them in a different category, reflecting their integral role in clinical research.
- The resulting deliverables included leveled competency statements and examples, a glossary, and additional implementation guidance via a Patient Partnership Supplement. Refer to slides for examples.
- Intended applications: workforce training, onboarding, grant design, and operational guidance for study teams.

3. Domain 6 Revision (Data, Informatics, and Statistics)

- Domain 6 has been significantly expanded to reflect the growing importance of **data literacy, informatics, and analytics** in clinical research. Clinical research teams must expand capabilities in data science while acknowledging specialized expertise across roles.
- Updated through a rigorous **four-round Delphi process** involving global experts and peer review.
- The revised domain now includes six competency areas, each of which has three proficiency levels:
 1. Data definition and generation
 2. Data collection and processing
 3. Data use
 4. Statistical analysis
 5. Data reuse
 6. Information systems selection, use, and evaluation
- Emphasis areas:
 - Increased focus on **data literacy and computational skills**
 - Recognition that advanced competencies may reside outside principal investigators (PIs)

- Alignment of proficiency levels with realistic role responsibilities

4. Emerging Themes from Stakeholder Discussion

A robust discussion followed the presentations of these two initiatives. An important focus of the discussion was how to integrate these initiatives into the next iteration of the JTF Framework. Additional themes included:

- **AI and advanced technologies:** Meeting attendees agreed on the need to integrate artificial intelligence and large language models into future competencies.
- **Operationalization challenges concerning the implementation of the proposed updates:**
 - Resource constraints (e.g., budgets for patient partners)
 - Role clarity and power dynamics within study teams (e.g., risk-based decision-making, who has responsibility for oversight and/or monitoring, etc.)
 - Lag time for adoption in academic programs and organizations. Adoption and curriculum integration may take 18-24 months or longer following framework updates.
 - Importance of educating the general public
- **Workforce development:**
 - Need for updated training ecosystems to support new competencies
 - Importance of early education (including student and community exposure)

5. Path Forward

- JTF will collect global feedback before integrating updates into Version 4.0.
- Publication of JTF-P3 and Domain 6 materials, along with broader dissemination, will support adoption. Ongoing priorities include:
 - Strengthening patient-centered research practices
 - Enhancing data and AI competencies
 - Ensuring scalable, practical implementation across institutions

- To be notified when the JTF-P3 journal article is available, please sign up at: mrctcenter.org/contact

Conclusion:

The meeting underscored a major evolution of the JTF competency framework toward **patient-centered, data-driven, and technology-enabled clinical research**. While the proposed changes are substantial, stakeholders broadly support their direction and emphasize the need for thoughtful, phased implementation to ensure successful adoption across the global clinical research workforce.

Appendix: Agenda

Time EDT	Topic	Speaker
9:00-9:10 AM	Welcome and Introduction	Barbara Bierer, MD Co-Chair, JTF Faculty Director, MRCT Center Stephen Sonstein, PhD Co-Chair, JTF Consultant, MRCT Center
9:10-9:35 AM	Process and Output of JTF Patient Partner Project (P3)	Sylvia Baedorf Kassis, MPH Program Director, MRCT Center Linda Hunter, BScN, MScN, PhD (C) Patient Engagement Lead Consultant, Bruyere Health Research Institute Former National Manager of the Patient and Community Partner Stream, CANTRAIN
9:35-10:00 AM	Process and Output of JTF Domain 6 Revision	Meredith Zozus, PhD Professor, Division Chief, Clinical Research Informatics University of Texas (UT) Health San Antonio, Long School of Medicine, Department of Population Health Sciences Richard Ittenbach, PhD Professor, Pediatrics Director, Clinical Data Science Program Associate Director for Planning and Evaluation Division of Biostatistics and Epidemiology, University of Cincinnati College of Medicine
10:00-10:55 AM	Discussion:	Facilitators Stephen Sonstein, PhD Co-Chair, JTF

	<p>What are the issues and processes for incorporating JTF-P3 and Domain 6 revision into the JTF Framework? What other changes are needed to the JTF Framework for Version 4.0?</p>	<p>Consultant, MRCT Center</p> <p>Discussants include:</p> <p>Elizabeth Edwards Chief of Staff to COO SVP Global Clinical Operations Parexel</p> <p>Stephanie Freel, PhD, PMP Director, Clinical Research Operations, Education and Outreach, Duke Office of Clinical Research Interim Director of Strategy and Innovation, Duke Clinical and Translational Sciences Institute (CTSI) Duke University</p> <p>Jessica Fritter, DHSc, MACPR, ACRP-CP, FACRP Associate Clinical Professor Director of Master of Clinical Research Director of Clinical Research Management Certificate Director of Embedded Clinical Trial Sciences Co-Director, Workforce Development, Clinical and Translational Science Institute Faculty Director, Multisite Trials Coordinating Center The Ohio State University</p> <p>Debra Pritchett, MBA, ACRP-CP Director, Emerging Talent Global Clinical Trial Organization (GCTO) Merck</p> <p>David Vulcano MSW, MBA, CIP, RAC, FACRP Chief Executive Officer Association of Clinical Research Professionals (ACRP)</p> <p>& meeting participants</p>
10:55-11:00 AM	Wrap-up	<p>Stephen Sonstein, PhD Co-Chair, JTF Consultant, MRCT Center</p>