In 2013 the Research Protections Office (RPO) began a major process improvement initiative. The RPO Redesign, as we fondly call this initiative, is a collaborative and comprehensive process involving RPO staff and constituents. Our focus, and the lens through which we evaluate this project, is on the researcher community, the efficiency and accuracy with which we conduct and report on our work, the integrity of the research review process, welfare and safety, and staff development.

For over a year, we have focused on implementing change in key areas of our work. We have celebrated many successes to date, including:

- We tested and upgraded InfoEd to the version that will facilitate electronic submissions.
- We are making a number of process improvements within the IBC, including the development of an electronic form for the submission of protocols.
- In collaboration with the IRB, IACUC, and IBC, we are working toward implementation of a new research training system using an on-line platform by the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) Program, which will eventually replace the current required trainings for working with human subjects, working with laboratory animals, and laboratory biosafety.
- With the UVM Cancer Center, we implemented a process to respond to the September 2015 mandate to use the National Cancer Institute Central IRB for adult oncology group trials.

Currently we are focusing on improvements to our workflow and systems, including electronic submissions for IRB protocols. After a robust testing process, our goal is to pilot the electronic submission process in the fall of 2016. Stay tuned for more information on this topic within the coming weeks.

One of the many things we have learned throughout the RPO Redesign is that this process will never be complete. Our office and its operations will continually evolve, as regulations, best practices, resources, and technologies change. The RPO staff is a dedicated, smart, and capable group of professionals and so we have every confidence in the continued success of the RPO Redesign.