

Purpose:

To describe the new automated process for issuing IROC-Houston's credentialing letters.

Materials:

IROC-Houston issues credentialing letters for approximately 75 different NCI NCTN clinical trials and this number is ever growing. The complexity of qualifying requirements for sites of newer trials is also growing. To more effectively and efficiently deal with these growths, we utilize an in-house program written in MATLAB that pulls all relevant information from several databases and organizes them into a credentialing letter that our staff can issue via email.

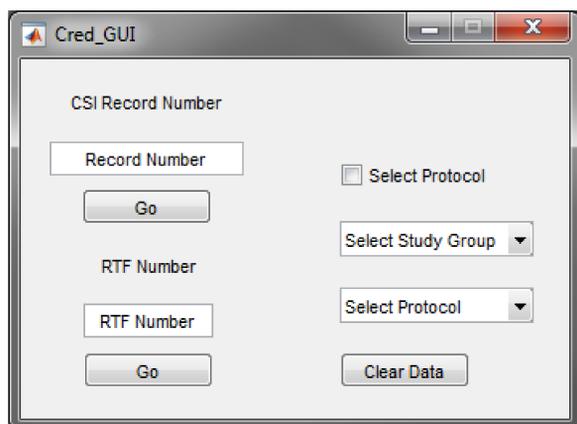


Fig. 1: The Graphic User Interface (GUI) written for MATLAB that users use to generate letters from CSI forms or RTF numbers

Methods:

The process for credentialing begins with a Credentialing Status Inquiry (CSI) form, which is filled out by a site wanting to be credentialed for a specific protocol. IROC-Houston checks the requirements stated by the protocol and if all are met, the site is issued a credentialing letter.

Utilizing MATLAB, the new automation software does the above work in a matter of seconds. It uses the site's Research Trial Facility (RTF) number to retrieve relevant phantom, Facility Questionnaire, contact and benchmarks and Image Guided Radiation Therapy (IGRT) credentialing information pertaining to protocol. The old timeframe from CSI receipt to letter generation allowed up to seven business days for the official letter to be sent.

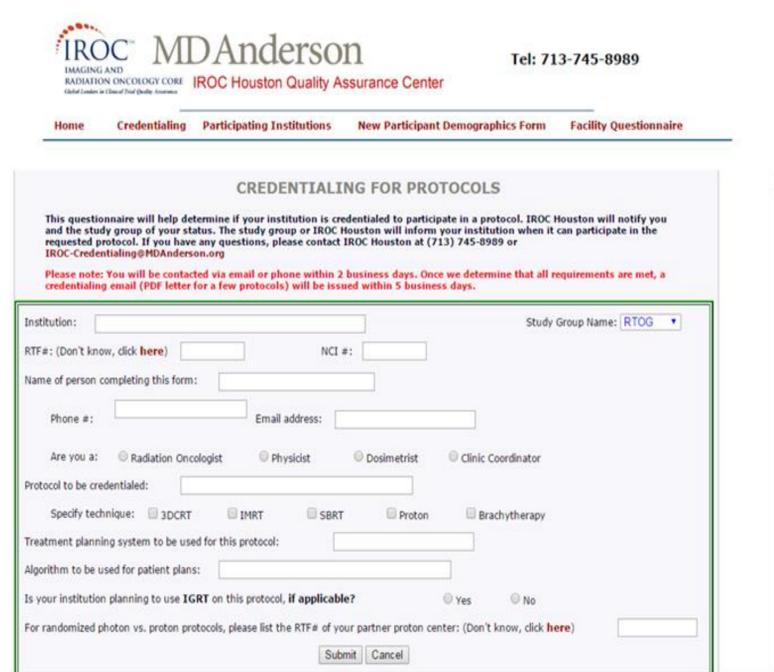


Fig. 2: A CSI form found on our website.

Results:

The purpose of the automated program is to organize information required to issue the letter and print out a template for the letter to help reduce overall time devoted to credentialing. The new process cuts the time down to two business days from the allowed 7 days and simplifies the format of the credentialing letter. In 2016, we received 2510 CSI Forms and issued 2148 credentialing letters. This new program has been utilized since 2/13/2017 to respond to 1319 CSI forms and has issued 1082 credentialing letters.

The automated process of gathering information to check requirements and creating the credentialing letter is accomplished four times faster relative to the old method. Based on 2016 numbers, this could save approximately 750 person-hours per year of processing CSI forms and generating letters to offset increasing demands for credentialing.

Conclusion:

With an increasing demand for credentialing, IROC Houston's new automated system has significantly reduced the time required to process CSI forms and issue credentialing letters to a site.

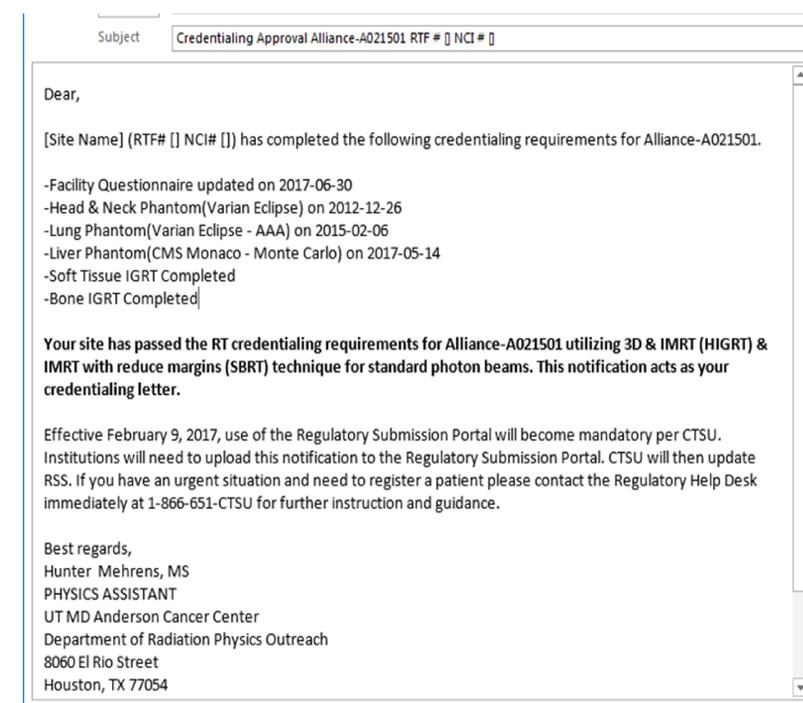


Fig. 3: An example of a new credentialing letter.

Support:

IROC grant CA180803 awarded by the NCI