REDCap
Research Electronic Data Capture

Advantages and Limitations

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO MEDICINE & BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

CENTER FOR RESEARCH INFORMATICS

What are the advantages of using REDCap?

- Up-front cost: $0.00, which includes training, support, and trouble-shooting.
- This tool is useful for various sized studies in supporting effective data capture.
- There are many training videos and help manuals available on the University of Chicago REDCap website: http://cri.uchicago.edu/redcap/
- Easy and intuitive to design, develop, and use data collection forms/screens.
- Screen layouts are clear and simple to navigate.
- Interactive editing includes range checks, data type checks, valid date checks, and branching logic.
- REDCap's Data Quality module supports reporting on problems with data consistency across forms.
- REDCap provides audit trails for tracking the history of data entry and revision.
- REDCap permits double-data-entry.
- REDCap supports web-based randomization.
- REDCap permits downloads of data to Excel, PDF, SAS, SPSS, Stata and R.
- In projects in which REDCap's Data Resolution Workflow (often called 'data queries' in clinical trials and studies) is enabled, users are allowed to use a workflow for documenting the process of resolving issues with data in the project.
- REDCap is being used extensively by other CTSAs, including Vanderbilt, Mayo Clinic, and Harvard.
- REDCap software includes models for a number of standard data collection instruments (e.g., RAND SF-36, many others, see http://www.project-redcap.org/library/index.php).

What are the limitations of REDCap?

- REDCap does not support billing. As a result, other systems may need to be considered and added to your plan, when you use REDCap.
- REDCap is not a workflow tool. Although it has some automation with emails, scheduling, surveys, and reports, many of these task still need manual intervention.
- REDCap does not prevent acquisition of data that is out of range. It provides warning messages regarding out-of-range values but these can be overridden.
- Although REDCap has data quality reports, any clinical investigator who makes use of REDCap should be prepared to support additional software development for error correction and quality control.
- Like ANY software system, REDCap can be misused. If you want to design a form/data entry module which is completely free-format with no editing, REDCap will not stop you from doing so.