Special Report
January 10, 2019

NRG Oncology makes plans for its continued success as leaders and stakeholders across the organization gathered December 14-15, 2018 to explore potential focus areas and goals for the organization.

In the midst of the busy year end activities, 50 committed NRG Oncology leaders and stakeholders gathered for a weekend in December to chart the course of NRG Oncology’s future. The strategic planning retreat attendees included committee chairs, member site representatives, young investigators, patient advocates, and operations, statistical, and data management representatives. Consultants from the Boston-based facilitation firm, Guided Insights, led the group through the weekend. With a nod to the many hats retreatants do wear, attendees received NRG Oncology baseball caps as a reminder of the singular focus of the retreat.

NRG Oncology’s strategic planning effort commenced over the summer 2018 with in-depth interviews conducted by the consultants, as well as the development and deployment of two focused surveys – one focused on internal stakeholders and another directed at member site principal investigators. Results were analyzed and synthesized into a 26-page assessment report for NRG’s leadership to consider.
Retreat attendees received NRG Oncology ball caps as they checked in.

Thom George, GI Cancer Committee, Norm Wolmark, Group Chair, Kathryn Winter, SDMC

Jeff Michalski, Rad Onc Committee

“This retreat represents our growth and maturity as an organization. Having the ability to meet like this, with the knowledge of our highly successful grant renewal and productivity record, reflects the hard work and commitment of all of NRG.”

- Norman Wolmark, NRG Oncology Group Chair

Retreat Focus Areas
The assessment report prepared by the consultants as a foundation for the strategic planning process included identification of 14 recommended focus areas. Drawing from this, 6 areas were identified as well-suited for breakout sessions during the planned in-person retreat. Each focus area would be discussed by a small group, with each group having a pre-identified facilitator to keep the discussion on-point. The focus areas were as below:

**How do we attract, retain, excite, engage, and develop new Principal Investigators, especially younger PIs, with an eye toward greater diversity?**  
**Facilitator:** Roisin O’Cearbhaill, Developmental Therapeutics Committee

**How should NRG Oncology ensure our financial stability and growth as one NRG?**  
**Facilitator:** Quynh-Thu Le, Head & Neck Cancer Committee

**Demonstrate how/why NRG Oncology plans, designs and runs complex, multi-site trials with the highest possible integrity and quality, most efficiently?**  
**Facilitator:** Jeff Bradley, Lung Cancer Committee

**Make NRG-led meetings the most sought-after venue where constituents can learn, share, teach, network, connect, inspire/be inspired by, and ultimately, get the best ROI for time spent**  
**Facilitator:** Jeff Michalski, Radiation Oncology Committee

**How do we select, prioritize, and move forward scientific concepts that are feasible and highly relevant to our mission?**  
**Facilitator:** Thom George, GI Cancer Committee

**Shorten cycle time (or increase the efficiency) of the protocol development process—while maintaining or exceeding NRG’s current standards of quality—in ways that members, physicians, patients, industry, NCI and other stakeholder groups will most value?**  
**Facilitator:** Minesh P. Mehta, Brian Tumor Committee

Each group was tasked with identifying potential actionable goals to enhance efforts and/or outcomes in their assigned focus area. In acknowledgement of opportunities to better integrate efforts in some areas, groups were asked to suggest goals that require increased integration and cooperation across the group were applicable. Each group presented back to the gathered group at large, with lively discussion and feedback.

**Next Steps**

NRG Oncology Executive Committee met just days after the retreat ended to take quick action on the heels of the retreat.
“The finalizing of the mission and vision statements is an obvious first step,” Robert Mannel advised as the committee debated the possible next steps.

They also established a small group to finalize a set of recommendations for the committees to codify committee membership guidelines in writing prior to the upcoming Semiannual Meeting.

The committee plans to task a small group to consider a strategy to assess and recommend changes to the Semiannual Meeting in advance of the upcoming meeting, understanding the strategic workgroup assigned to the task would not really commence work until early Spring.

The Executive Committee will receive a report from the retreat and work toward finalizing a full strategic plan in the weeks ahead.

Initial plans will be discussed at the upcoming Semiannual Meeting General Session.