We are glad to introduce this first issue of MERAC newsletter. This quarterly publication is designed to update our teams on the status of our research project.

Our intention is to provide administrative and academic information to keep us motivated and updated.

We are very excited to launch the study and are looking forward to a successful outcome.

NEWS

Congratulations to Dr. Halabi for enrolling the first four patients into the study in October of 2012. A million thanks from everyone. 😊

Our web page is live. Please check it out: http://qatar-weill.cornell.edu/research/faculty/researchfaculty.html

Training videos and SOP are on the webpage. Please review and update as needed for your center. Our intent is to develop a site specific SOP with your help. You will be informed as new SOP are completed.
COMMUNICATIONS

Based on a belief that direct communication is the shortest way to reach a target, a wide communications plan was set, put into action and is going smoothly, thanks to all of you.

1) We successfully created our study email address MERAC IN / MERAC OUT.
   - WCMC-Q users: https://merac.qatar-weill.cornell.edu
   - External users: https://merac.qatar-weill.cornell.edu/centers

2) Starting in December 2012 we would like to start our monthly group meeting via Skype to review the status of the study and pertinent literature. More to come!

FINANCE

Many of you have asked questions about billing. The sub-awards are issued on a reimbursement basis with invoices reimbursed by WCMC-Q as follows:

1 - Collaborators should spend the money at their institutions as per the agreements signed by the member institutions.
   then...

2 - Send WCMC-Q the invoice and WCMC-Q will reimburse the institution.

For Advance payment - There are only a couple sub awards which allow for advance payment. The collaborating institutions have to make a case and if the WCMC-Q finance office agrees then the sub-award agreement will have to be amended. Only the first payment will be made in advance and that at a maximum amount 25% of the first-year budget.

Please send invoices on a monthly basis as to make sure and better assess that the budget is spent within the calendar year. Carryover of unused budget in not guaranteed.

MEETINGS

The MERAC scientific meetings are a must-attend event for all contributors to the study. : )

Our first meeting was held at WCMC-Q on May 30-31, 2012 and was attended by all our contributors. Innovative sessions, lectures and a tour of the WCMC-Q campus were highlights followed by a dinner.

The meeting provided an action plan for the implementation of the study.

Finally...

On behalf of all of us, we are enormously grateful for your exceptional contribution to the study. We wish you all a wonderful start. Be well, keep moving and please let us know if you have any questions.