

Medical physicists receive technical training in areas related to clinical practice and research, but little professional training in areas related to the management and implementation of clinical projects. In the medical environment, physicists are an integral part of a clinical team that delivers patient care, but are also frequently called upon to serve as members of a project team for the acquisition and installation of new equipment and facilities. The physicists' role can take on many dimensions, from serving as the project manager to interested stakeholder. In order to assist medical physicists optimize their participation in these roles, fundamental concepts of project management related to clinical projects are presented. The discussion includes project life cycles, tenants of project management and tools key to project success. Project Scope Triangles will be discussed to highlight competing considerations over the life cycle of a project. Key elements of project plans, are illustrated along with discussion of how best to utilize tools such as Gantt Charts to ensure project success. Parameters for quantifying the progress of a project, and methods for maintaining a schedule are presented, along with methods for managing potential changes over the course of a project. Finally concepts for the successful negotiation of various aspects of clinical projects are considered and final closeout/completion documentation are presented. The principles presented will allow medical physicists to successfully participate as project team members, whether having responsibility for managing a project or ensuring that an externally managed project is progressing in a timely manner.