

# Q&A Coffee Sessions

## with EDGE super users

EDGE?



Super User!

**ISSUE:** September 2022



**Name:** Julie Aitken

**Organisation:** NHS Fife

**Job title:** R&D Quality & Performance Lead

**Email:** [julie.aitken2@nhs.scot](mailto:julie.aitken2@nhs.scot)

### Why and how did you move into your current role?

I started my career in clinical research as a monitor working for a Contract Research Organisation (CRO). I joined the NHS Fife R&D Department in 2014, initially as a Trials Facilitator. To start with, my work involved helping to set up studies and maintaining site files. But I gradually became more involved in managing our Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and

auditing studies. Eventually, I moved into my current role as Quality & Performance Lead in 2019.

### What does your role as R&D Quality & Performance Lead at NHS Fife entail on a typical day?

We're a small team, so my role is varied and the demands change from day-to-day. I get involved in a lot of problem-solving, advising research staff on issues relating to studies and developing and reviewing our processes. Our team collates all the recruitment figures and tracks the progress of each study, making sure that the timelines on EDGE and other databases are accurate. We also manage the R&D Policies, SOPs and work instructions, and we audit NHS Fife sponsored and hosted studies. It is very collaborative. I work with Research Nurses and Clinical Research Assistants from a great variety of clinical research specialties. Their work is intricate and involves patient-facing work and complex study protocols, so it is great to work closely with them to develop processes that have an

impact on our patients, the participants' experiences, and our research performance.

### How does the patient and research landscape currently look at NHS Fife?

The two main sites where research is conducted in NHS Fife are Queen Margaret Hospital in Dunfermline where I'm based, and Victoria Hospital in Kirkcaldy. Our R&D department consists of a small team of admin staff and a larger team of just over 20 research staff who are organised into teams covering specific therapeutic areas. We are an agile team, so we can work in a variety of settings and use technology to support a hybrid working model which worked incredibly well during the pandemic.

### You've been using EDGE for over 2 years now. How do you personally utilise EDGE in your daily role?

As the Lead EDGE Admin, I am responsible for creating and managing user accounts and I work

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with colleagues in the admin team and research teams to develop workflows and entities. As Quality & Performance Lead, I collate recruitment figures and pull reports which I review on a regular basis with each research team. I also use EDGE workflows to capture auditing processes and to track study breaches.

### **As an R&D Quality & Performance Lead, how does the use of EDGE make your job easier?**

EDGE has definitely made it easier to keep track of recruitment activity. Before using EDGE, we had to check the recruitment logs for individual studies each month, which took hours. Now I can pull a report from EDGE in minutes. This was particularly useful in allowing me to easily track COVID recruitment in real time. We now use EDGE to track every stage of study progress from feasibility to study completion and archiving. And I can easily pull a report to see the status of individual studies and we use these in our regular meetings with research teams where we discuss any issues with study setup or recruitment. The feedback from the nursing team is incredibly positive, although there have obviously been the usual teething issues as everyone settles into using a new system. I'm glad to say that rolling out specific training to the team and being available to them has had a positive impact on how we work. We have developed workflows and attributes to replace the forms and checklists associated with some of our SOPs and these act as a guide to help staff follow the SOP and allow me to easily check compliance with the SOP.

### **What is your favourite functionality to use in EDGE and why?**

It is difficult to choose between entities and workflows. I'm continually looking for ways to replace forms and spreadsheets with them, so much so that people are wary of mentioning a spreadsheet or form they use in case I try to persuade them to use EDGE instead. I can't imagine how we managed to cope without them!

### **What are your/site's plans for using and developing EDGE over the next 12 months?**

At the moment it's only the R&D research teams who use EDGE, but we are looking to extend this to other research staff in Fife. We've also started to use EDGE to track study finances and we're looking to expand on that. I'm currently teaching myself how to use Power BI and would like to be able to develop some of the more elaborate reports I've seen others produce with data from EDGE.

### **What is your "bigger picture?" That is, what do you find most fulfilling about your role?**

I love learning new things and developing better ways of doing things. I enjoy helping colleagues and working with them to resolve issues. It's amazing to see a small team grow through the years and to help it adapt and develop at various stages. I really enjoy that collaboration with team members.

### **Describe one of your team's greatest achievements:**

One of our greatest achievements was how we coped with the pandemic and how we adapted to a completely different way of working. The admin team had to work from home and the research teams had to suspend most of their existing studies and rapidly set up a number of COVID studies. March 2020 also just happened to be when we started using EDGE – probably not the best time to be

implementing a new system. But, as usual, everyone just took it in their stride!

### **One clinical research superpower that you wish you possessed:**

The power to create a set of national SOPs that everyone could work to, so I wouldn't have to spend so much time developing new ones and revising existing ones.

### **The best thing about living in Fife:**

Fife is described as a small Kingdom but it really does have everything! We have a mixture of the most beautiful, lush countryside, and some of the finest coastal villages with long stretches of sandy beaches. Fife has a strong heritage with historical landmarks, conservation villages like Falkland and Culross, Fife Heritage Trail castles, a resurgent market town network, a fabulous University at St Andrews, and we're close to Edinburgh, Dundee and Glasgow. Wildlife is never far from our doorsteps. Sea and loch swimming has become a big pull to the area and we have a beautiful coastal pool at Pittenweem. Personally, I love Fife for its famous coastal fish and chips, and ice cream!

### **One thing that inspires you:**

I'm continually inspired by the clinical research staff here in Fife. They manage to juggle a number of different studies at the one time and are always willing to adopt new processes and adapt existing ways of working, to ensure the studies recruit well, the patients are cared for and the data collected is of a high quality.

By Ken Brackstone, Clinical Informatics Research Unit.  
[K.Brackstone@soton.ac.uk](mailto:K.Brackstone@soton.ac.uk).