Electronic ARA/901 Working Group Minutes

Date: Wednesday, Nov. 18, 2003
Time: 1:00 p.m.–3:00 p.m.
Location: Rockledge 2, Room 6087
Chair: Ellen Liberman

Action Items

1. (Christine Melchior, Suzanne Fisher) Recruit an SRA representative to attend the next Electronic ARA/901 Focus Group meeting.

Clarifications and Additional Requirements

Sara Silver asked group members if they had any changes or additions to the list of requirements documented at the last ARA/901 Focus Group meeting. The group made the following suggestions:

1. *Drop-down list*—The drop-down list for different categories of ARAs or Reasons for ARA (e.g., “500k,” “Asking for Referral,” “Different Receipt Date”) should be *in addition* to the Narrative section currently on the ARA form, not in place of it. Also, users should have the ability to select more than one reason for an ARA from the drop-down list for different categories of ARAs/Reasons for ARA.
2. *Sending Authority*—Designated individuals *other* than the Referral Liaison should have “sending authority” (i.e., the ability to send ARAs to CSR). The group decided that the Referral Liaison should be able to delegate this authority to one or more people and that *only* the Referral Liaison (and personnel that the Referral Liaison has specifically designated) should be allowed to submit ARAs to CSR. If anyone other than the Referral Liaison is sending the ARA to CSR, the Referral Liaison should be cc’ed. Chanath Ratnanather said that this chain of approval would be incorporated into the organizational layers and delegation design of the system.
3. *Automatic email notifications*—Automatic email notifications should be the default, but users should be allowed to configure whether or not they want to receive notifications; users will also be able to use the Status Screen to obtain the same information provided by the email notifications. If users opt to receive notifications, they should be allowed to determine which types of notifications they want to receive. Types of email notifications could include the following:
   - ARA has been matched to an application
   - ARA has been submitted
   - ARA has been approved by Referral Liaisons
   - CSR has assigned the grant number
   - ARA has not been matched to an application. The group agreed that users should be allowed to determine a time they’d like to receive this particular notification.

The group approximated four weeks after the application receipt date as a reasonable default.

- CSR has found a problem with the ARA.

4. *Application Number/Review Assignment*—The application number and the review assignment will be required if CSR *approves* the ARA. If CSR disapproves the ARA, the requesting IC should be notified of the assignment and application number, if applicable.
5. *Search to match ARAs*—For the search, the system should first try to match the ARA by grant number (if a Type 2 or revision), then by a combination of PI and Institution, and then by PI last name. The group asked that the hitlist identify how each item was matched (whether it was matched by grant number, PI/Institution, or by PI name only). For extraordinary circumstances, a separate search on Title should be allowed.
6. *Entering PI Name Not in the Database*—Users should be allowed to enter a PI name that is not in the database. While it is important for the database to search and identify the PI name entered, the system should also allow a freeform entry/storage of a PI name that is not in the database. The group agreed that the system should *first* try to match the PI name entered in the database. If the database does not find a match, then the user should have the ability to enter a PI name freeform.
7. *Status Screen, Hitlist, ARA Statuses*—The Status Screen should include the following query parameters: PI Name (Last, First), IC (should default to the IC of the user), Receipt Date Range, Council Round, Institution (with wildcard search capability), Title/Subject (by key word), Program Class Code, Originator (the person who originally submitted the ARA), Submission Date Range, and the Status.

   The hitlist should present the PI Name, Institution, Title/Subject of ARA, the descriptive title of the application, the status of the ARA (e.g., submitted, received, approved, etc.), and where the ARA has been referred.

   From the hitlist, the user should be able to access both a Detail screen and an Audit screen.

   Sara asked the group to define the various status levels of an ARA. Statuses include:

   - Submitted, but not sent to CSR
   - Pending in Receipt and Referral
   - Matched in Receipt and Referral but not assigned
   - Referral Outcome
   - No match after four weeks
   - Archived in ARA (after 6 months)

   A separate search will be needed for Archived statuses.

8. *Modifying ARAs*—Consider whether users should have the ability to modify and update an existing ARA or if users should be required to resubmit an entirely new ARA to replace the old ARA.
9. *Narrative Statement/Annotation Boxes*—The user interface should feature two boxes: one for the narrative statement and one for annotation notes.
10. *Deleting/Archiving ARAs*—Consider whether ARAs should be deleted from the system. The group suggested creating an archive to store ARAs since there are legal implications involved in deleting these documents. It would be helpful if users could also access this information via a query.
11. *Querying ARAs*—Anyone in an IC (with access to the eRequest ARA/901 functionality) should be allowed to query an ARA. Queries are not limited to a chain of approval.
12. *eRA Modules and the E-Request system*—The eRA modules should provide direct access to the E-Request system. Users should be able to access the eRequest 901 and ARA functionality from within the following modules: ICO, Program, Peer Review, and Receipt and Referral.

ARA Routing Process/Chain of Approvals

Sara asked the group to clarify the chain of approval/routing of ARAs. The group said ARAs are generally routed in the following manner:

1. ARAs are submitted by someone in the IC (anyone can submit ARAs).
2. ARAs are received, reviewed, and subject to action by several key people in the IC. These people may be different for every ARA. Chanath asked if any of these people could be predetermined and built into the system. For AHRQ, ARAs over $500K have a static approval chain, but other than this one exception, every chain of approvals/routing process may be different for each ARA. Chanath said that it would be helpful to have a few predetermined people to provide routing options to users. Ellen Liberman suggested featuring a drop-down box where users could select their preferred routing method.
3. After internal IC approvals, ARAs are received by the Referral Liaison.
4. Referral Liaisons (or their delegates) submit ARAs to CSR for review and action. The Receipt and Referral Chief role in CSR will need the authority to approve/disapprove ARAs.

The group agreed that the system also should provide ICs the ability to route ARAs back and forth between ICs. Sometimes, ICs may need to review and discuss the same ARA. The group also agreed that when routing ARAs back and forth from one IC to another, the Referral Liaison should always be the point of contact.

Finally, the group suggested that the system keep track of individuals who have reviewed ARAs (a history/audit of where and when the ARA was sent and received, with accompanying actions)

Issues Still Needing Clarification

Sara said that there are still a number of issues that need to be resolved regarding the Electronic ARAs. Specifically, the group needs to discuss how to handle—

- Blanket exemptions
- Negative ARAs (how to delineate them in the system)
- Non-IC requested (CSR-generated) ARAs (whether these ARAs need to be categorized separately)
- ARAs that have never been matched
- Forwarding ARAs
- Modifying ARAs

Future Meetings

The group decided to meet Tuesday, December 2, 1–3 p.m., in Rockledge 1, Room 3087. This meeting will wrap up discussion of the ARAs and begin to focus on requirements for the Electronic 901s.

Ellen asked Christine Melchior if she would ask a fellow SRA to attend future meetings. Another SRA perspective would be useful when discussing the 901s. Christine, with the help of Suzanne Fisher, agreed to recruit another SRA representative.

Finally, Ellen reported that although she has not conducted any investigations into systems similar to the envisioned electronic ARA/901, she plans to scope out a few helpful systems in the future. She will keep the group updated on this initiative.

Action: (Christine Melchior, Suzanne Fisher) Recruit an SRA representative to attend the next Electronic ARA/901 Focus Group meeting.

Attendees

Armistead, Allyson (LTS)

Calderone, Jerry (AHRQ)

Fisher, Suzanne (CSR)

Liberman, Ellen (NEI)

Melchior, Christine (CSR)

Noronha, Jean (NIMH)

Ramm, Louise (NCRR)

Ratnanather, Chanath (Z-Tech)

Silver, Sara (Z-Tech)

Stesney, JoAnn (for Allan Czarra) (NIAID)

Vann, Cecelia (NIH/OD)