

What am I Missing Here?

Thought-Provoking Questions for the Clinical Research Industry

By Norman M. Goldfarb

96. It Depends

Research sites often measure productivity with metrics such as the number of clinical trials or study subjects or visits/week that each study coordinator handles. These metrics are useful but can be highly misleading. Just try to tell a study coordinator on a tough trial to pick up the pace because study coordinators with easy trials have better numbers. A more accurate metric is study budget (revenue), adjusted for pass-through costs that do not take much coordinator time to manage. Study budgets roughly reflect the amount of work required. You have to share some financial information with the study coordinators but it will help them focus their efforts on activities that help the site survive and prosper. What am I missing here?

97. You Get To Be First!

When a research site starts a new study, study personnel typically learn on-the-study with the first few subjects. With experience, study personnel conduct visits more efficiently and possibly with less discomfort and risk to the subjects. The site initiation visit is often a rehash of the investigator meeting. Why not use it instead to conduct a role-playing exercise? Perhaps the first subject in a study should be informed of his/her pioneering role. Perhaps the stipend should be a bit higher to compensate for the extra time and possible discomfort and risk. What am I missing here?

Do you know a better way? Is something getting under your skin?

Please send your thoughts for future columns to ngoldfarb@firstclinical.com.

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