

## What Am I Missing Here?

### Thought-Provoking Questions for the Clinical Research Industry

By Norman M. Goldfarb

#### 145. Science or craft?

Clinical research is a scientific enterprise, but we conduct it more like a craft. Most study coordinators and clinical research associates learn bits and pieces of tradecraft from more experienced people, rather than from systematic training. Regulatory myths, inefficient processes, and other folklore pass from generation to generation. Numerous publications, training programs, and other educational resources are available, but underutilized. It's no surprise, since professional certification is optional. Few site questionnaires even ask about certification. Less than one percent of investigators are certified. Unlike respiratory therapists, dental hygienists, and home health aides, clinical researchers do not even have an organization to accredit educational programs. What am I missing here?

**Do you know a better way? Is something getting under your skin? Please send your ideas for future columns to [ngoldfarb@firstclinical.com](mailto:ngoldfarb@firstclinical.com).**

#### Author

Norman M. Goldfarb is Managing Director of First Clinical Research LLC, a provider of clinical research best practices information, consulting and training services. Contact him at 1.650.465.0119 or [ngoldfarb@firstclinical.com](mailto:ngoldfarb@firstclinical.com).