

## **Employment Climate in the Clinical Research Industry**

**By Norman M. Goldfarb**

The author conducted a survey of seven staffing firms that represent a broad cross section of the clinical research industry. Their focus, in general, is on permanent and contract pharmaceutical and contract research organization (CRO) employers. The largest part of the market is for clinical research associates (CRAs).

The survey question was:

"Compared to this time last year, in clinical research, for your firm, roughly what percentage increase or decrease have you seen in the number of open positions and the number of people looking for new positions?"

Results of the survey (Figure 1) show that median demand for personnel increased by 30% and median supply decreased by 15%. The increase in demand over the past 12 months (2017/2018), +30%, matched the record high increase of 2012/2013. The decrease in supply, -15%, beat the previous record decrease of -10% in 2007/2008.

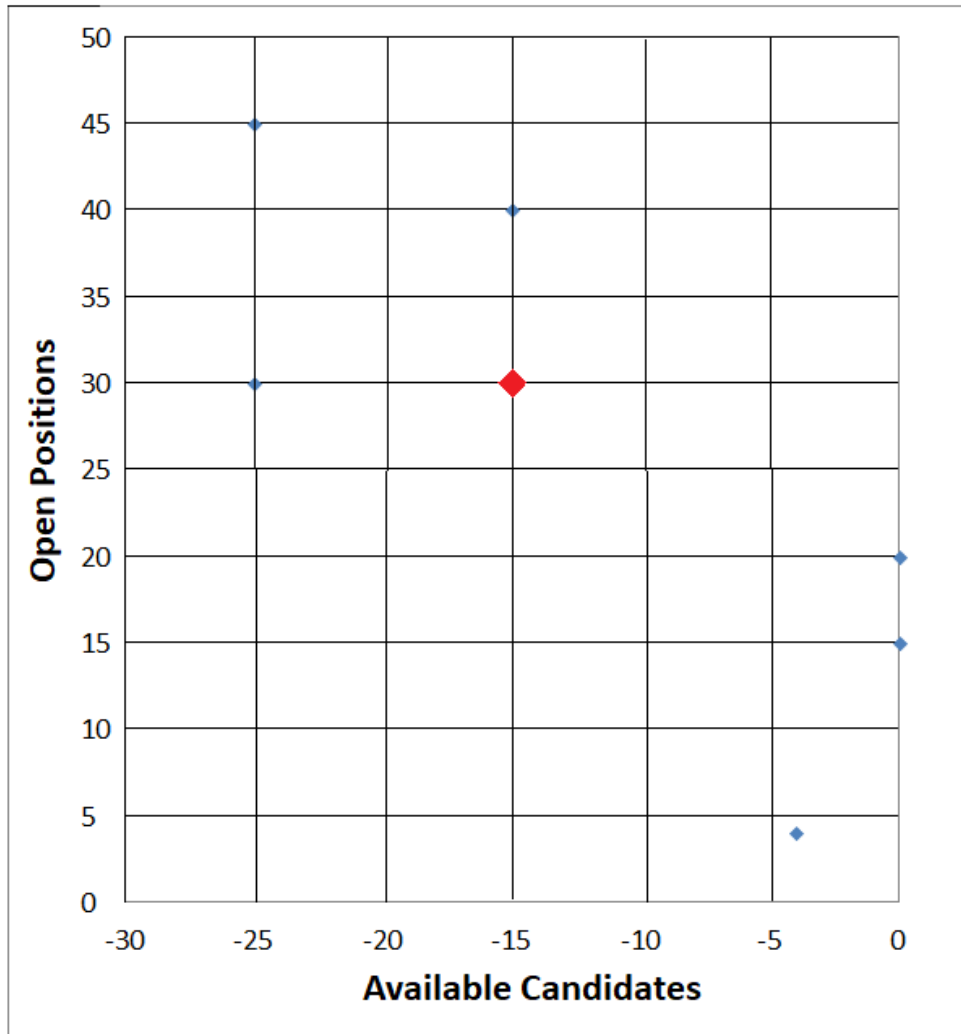
Over the past 12 years, median demand increased by an average of 18% per year. In contrast, over the same period, median supply mostly held steady, indicating that there is a reservoir of people who enter or leave the employment market based on market conditions.

The following staffing firms participated in the survey:

- Advanced Clinical
- Aerotek
- Barrington James
- Green Key Resources
- Kelly Services
- Novella Clinical Resourcing
- The Clinical Resource Network

Web addresses for these firms are available at <http://www.firstclinical.com/directories/staffing.html>.

**Figure 1. Supply and Demand for Clinical Research Personnel  
(% Change Over Past Year)**



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