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Global Survey Reveals CROs Leading Industrywide Shift to Modernize Clinical Trial Processes

91% of CROs taking steps to unify clinical operations for better visibility and improved study execution

PLEASANTON, CA — Nov. 14, 2018 — Contract research organizations (CROs) are driving industrywide momentum to unify clinical systems and streamline trial processes, according to a new global industry survey from Veeva Systems (NYSE:VEEV). CROs continue to lead the adoption of modern clinical applications to increase operational efficiency, simplify trial collaboration, and improve study quality.

The *Veeva 2018 Unified Clinical Operations Survey: Annual CRO Report* reveals that CROs lead sponsors in adopting purpose-built clinical applications, particularly in study start-up (33% of CROs vs. 17% of sponsors) and CTMS (66% vs. 54%). This momentum is consistent with organizations' focus on improving study visibility and execution, the two top drivers among CROs for unifying clinical applications.

A third (33%) of CROs also cite collaboration as a challenge. Unified systems and processes make it easier for CROs, sponsors, and sites to work together and share information throughout the course of a trial. This is contributing to CROs' move toward advanced clinical applications, as most (91%) now have initiatives planned or underway to unify their clinical applications for improved trial performance.

Streamlining Study Start-up a Top Priority

Speeding study execution has become a top priority for CROs, especially as sponsors continue to outsource study start-up processes. Findings show that nearly 80% of CROs are taking steps to improve study start-up. This supports the fact that an increasing number of CROs are making technology investments to improve trial efficiency.[1]

Easier collaboration among trial partners is one of the top three most important drivers for enhancing study start-up processes. Almost half of CROs (45%) say collaboration during study start-up continues to be an area of improvement.

Opportunity to Improve Clinical Trial Management Processes

CROs report the need to improve their use of CTMS in trial operations, with 81% citing CTMS system issues as a limiting factor. Most CROs have CTMS applications that cannot fully support a range of key functions, including investigator relationship management (93%), governance and oversight (89%), and study metrics and reporting (85%).

The majority of CROs see improving CTMS systems and processes as a way to enable proactive risk identification (74%), improve study analytics and reporting (60%), and enhance visibility to effectively manage and optimize trials (59%).

Significant Momentum Toward Active TMF Management

The number of CROs now using an eTMF application has more than doubled since 2014, from 21% to 54%. This increase has been matched by a decline in general purpose content management systems and file shares, signaling a shift from passive TMF management toward a mature, active TMF operating model where TMF processes and information are managed in real-time.

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[1] Pharmaoutsourcing.com. The Increasing Shift of Clinical Trials to CROs. May 2015.

CROs have made significant progress in modernizing trial processes with purpose-built eTMF applications. Organizations that use advanced eTMF applications report having greater visibility into TMF status and fewer challenges, including with study partner collaboration.

“CROs continue to lead the move toward a unified clinical operating model and drive more efficient and effective trial processes throughout the industry,” said Jennifer Goldsmith, senior vice president of Veeva Vault. “As more organizations modernize their clinical environments, drug development will become more streamlined through faster study execution.”

The *Veeva 2018 Unified Clinical Operations Survey: Annual CRO Report* examines CROs’ progress in unifying clinical operations by gathering the experiences and opinions of CRO respondents from around the world. This annual research examines the drivers, barriers, and benefits of a unified clinical operating model and tracks the industry’s progress in its move to streamline clinical systems and processes.

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