Investigator Site Survey Results Revealed

IntraLinks conducted the "IntraLinks Global Investigator Site Survey" in May 2012 to better understand how the clinical trial document exchange process has evolved since the previous year with sponsors and clinical research organizations (CROs), and to gain a better understanding of the continuing challenges of using paper-based methods. The survey results ultimately revealed an increased prevalence in the use of webbased clinical document management tools, but that there is a significant opportunity for investigator sites to improve efficiency through webbased solutions for clinical trial exchange.

A considerable majority of the survey respondents, 76% (a 3% increase over the previous year) still use traditional methods (e-mail, courier, and fax) as their primary means for clinical trial document exchange. E-mail usage rates ranked the highest, while courier and fax usage were less prevalent (but still used) as the main way for exchanging clinical trial documents. Adoption of electronic tools has grown, yet these methods continue to fall short in addressing the current document exchange needs at most clinical trial sites.



TIME CONSUMING & LACK OF ACTIONABLE INSIGHT 78 % REQUEST TO RESEND DOCUMENTS AT LEAST 1-2 TIMES PER WEEK 666 % SEARCHING FOR DOCUMENTS AT LEAST 2 HOURS PER WEEK 588 % TRACK DUE DATES

Inefficiencies remain

Two key themes stand out regarding the typical issues with these traditional methods: first, they are too time consuming and don't provide actionable insight, and second, they don't fully provide the ability to understand the status of information and ability to take action or make decisions. 58% of respondents track due dates for information, current status or milestones manually using, for example, white boards, paper calendars and to-do lists. 66% of respondents spend at least two hours, and in some cases more than nine hours, per week searching for documents. Almost 78% respondents report resending documents to sponsors and CROs at least once or twice a week.

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76%

of survey respondents still use traditional methods (e-mail, courier, fax) as their primary means for clinical trial document exchange.

MORE THAN 2/3

of respondents cited being able to access updated information right away and paper reduction as anticipated benefits of using a web-based exchange tool.





NUMBER OF CONCURRENT STUDIES

30

25

Anticipated benefits

The sites surveyed responded that the anticipated benefits of using a web-based document exchange tool would help address the current inefficiencies and that there were few anticipated downsides. More than two-thirds of respondents cited being able to access updated information right away as well as reduce the amount of paper they use as advantages. 60% cited being able to keep track of information easily and almost 50% of respondents reported that they expected to spend less time searching for information. Further, nearly 70% expected faster turnaround time in completing the survey and submitting it to a sponsor/ CRO. The survey reinforced that it is pivotal to consider the voice of the investigator, especially at high performing sites, in planning and deploying web-based clinical document exchange tools to reach optimal productivity gains and efficiencies.

Increase in use of online tools

Respondents reporting use of an online tool for study document exchange jumped by nearly 9 percent. The usage of online clinical trial portals also rose this year from 71% to 83%.

Conclusions

Overall, the survey demonstrates that investigator sites are using online systems at an increased rate, but have yet to reap the rewards of efficiencies generated by these tools.

There needs to be a paradigm shift to evaluate clinical document exchange challenges from a clinical community perspective, i.e. Sponsor, CRO, Investigator Site, IRB/ECs. There are early indications that sponsors/CROs seem to be willing to take a holistic approach, and look beyond their own perspective. Leveraging a community-based solution, where all clinical community members have transparency and actionable insight in a simple, easy-to-use, web-based solution, will ultimately reduce the burden of training, support, and passwords.

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