
How sponsors and sites can achieve a harmonious and optimized site budget negotiation process

Introduction

The typical site budget negotiation process is burdened by siloed data, manual activities, and a lack of trust between the sponsor, CRO, and the clinical research sites. An inadequate budget and contract process can contribute to timeline delays, poor patient enrollment, and financial instability for sites and sponsors, impacting the entire study.

As clinical trials become increasingly complex, the burden on the site and patient continues to grow, making clinical trial agreements and site budget negotiations imperative to the financial health of sites. Many factors make reaching consensus on CTAs and budgets challenging, including inflation, hidden costs, and difficulty accessing fair-market-value data. Negotiations are often handled manually through emails and spreadsheets. A lack of visibility and a central audit trail for sites, sponsors, and CROs leads to confusion, inaccurate budgets, and dissatisfied parties. Contemporary Clinical Trials Communications researched how principal investigators survive the complex process, identify coping strategies, and combat budget negotiation challenges.

Table 1: Common Coping Mechanisms Used to Address Trial-Finance Challenges¹

Figure 2: Top Sponsor & CEO Challenges: Site Budget Negotiation Process

The Benefits of Transparency

Many of the concerns that sites, sponsors, and CROs have can be resolved by increasing the visibility of the budget negotiation process to ensure that all parties receive appropriate remuneration for their roles in advancing clinical research. Sponsors, CROs, and sites can encourage greater transparency by taking specific actions. With access to technology and site-specific cost data, sponsors and CROs would be well equipped to treat each site individually during the budget negotiation process. "Being as clear as you can upfront about your pricing for a particular project helps everyone get off on the right foot," said

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