PhUSE Abstract

Juggling balls and Resource Management: Strategies from a CRO perspective

Resource management is the efficient and effective use of resources within an organisation: ensuring the demands of clients, employees and the business are met. Processes must be followed and techniques applied in order to produce a "best estimate" resource forecast, as far into the future as is reasonable. Within the Clinical Research Organsation (CRO) environment, there are many contributing factors which make the process of Resource Management a challenge: constantly moving project timelines, unclear project requirements, changing client expectations and limited budgets to name just a few. These may be issues that are common in the pharmaceutical industry, however resource management within a CRO does become more demanding given the large number of clients whose needs must be met, all of which are deemed "priority" projects and are expected to be treated as such.

The aim of the paper is to explain the difficulties encountered within a CRO and how these are best overcome, whilst managing the client, employee and company expectations. Resource Management is indeed a challenge but given the right skills and processes to follow, all the balls being juggled will remain in the air!

Presentation topics:

- Functional Service Provision (FSP) versus Fixed Price: Challenges of satisfying both methods.
- Work Requests: Information required in order to produce realistic resource estimates.
- Resource Allocation: How we resource as a CRO; Tracking peaks and troughs in demand and supply; Strategies applied to overcome unexpected peaks in demand; Contingency plans.
- Use of internal Resource Management tool: Data collection; Tracking demand and supply; Resource reports.
- Client Facing: Setting expectations; Transparent and open communication.
- Difficulties / Challenges faced: Changing factors such as project timelines, under-estimation of resource requirements and changing project expectations.
- Resource forecasts: Additional uses of resource data by other functions including Finance and Business Development.
- Maintaining staff retention and providing staff development opportunities, while meeting client expectations.