WORLDWIDE
CLINICAL TRIALS

THE KEYS TO SUCCESS FOR ACHIEVING **FIRST TO FILE STATUS**

When it comes to first to file studies, preparation is key. First to file studies are unique, as their need for speed in an increasingly complex environment is vital. Not only must your turnaround time be quick, but your data needs to be of the utmost quality as well. Navigating any unexpected regulatory hurdles can make your Phase I clinical trial experience delays.

In this guide, we will uncover qualities to look for in a contract research organization (CRO) partner to help with your filing, challenges you may be faced with, and what success can look like when you apply these learnings.

SEVERAL FACTORS TO CONSIDER WHEN SELECTING A CRO PARTNER FOR A FIRST TO FILE STUDY

STAFF CHARACTERISTICS:

Responsiveness and open communication is key. When selecting a CRO partner, it's important to consider their turnover rate. Is staff turnover a pain point? Turnover in a first to file study could interrupt the study, resulting in delayed submission.

EXPERIENCE:

An experienced and flexible CRO is needed in order to bring all the various steps of a first to file study to successful completion. The technical capability and expertise to develop and validate methods that can perform consistently is needed to analyze a high number of samples in a minimal amount of time.

FLEXIBILITY:

Since the lab must run at-the-ready, the CRO you select must have a flexible bioanalytical lab to receive, log-in, aliquot, and extract samples at any time – day or night, including holidays or weekends. The CRO's clinical team, statistical team and medical writing team members must maintain a flexible schedule as well during this timeframe.

QUALITY:

Does the CRO have a quality assurance (QA) team that reviews each step throughout the process to ensure nothing is amiss? While timing is of the essence, the quality of the data is equally important. Choosing a CRO that has an experienced and thorough QA team in place can help mitigate mistakes and safeguard the procedures and consistency of deliverables.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS THAT NEED TO BE THOUGHT THROUGH FOR A FIRST TO FILE STUDY

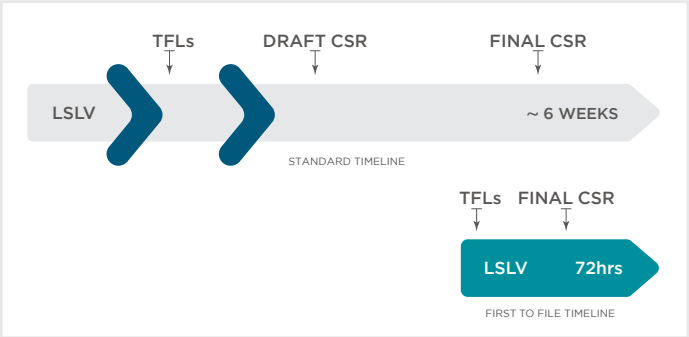
- Number of studies and number of subjects needed
- Administration – for example, fasted or fed
- Study design – whether the study would be parallel or crossover in design
- Analysis – number of time points being analyzed per subject

Other considerations that are specific to the sample analysis would be the time required to extract the samples and the instrument time required per sample. Some studies might dose on the same day or dosing may occur on different days. Sponsors also need to consider the time required to dose and get samples drawn and analyzed in the lab. There are many additional steps in the process after sample analysis is complete such as QA review of the data, pharmacokinetics (PK) analysis, report drafting, review and finalization. All of these have to be done before a complete package is available and timing for these has to be planned as well.

THE TOP CHALLENGES SPONSORS EXPERIENCE WHEN IT COMES TO FIRST TO FILE STUDIES

MEETING TIMELINES:

Being the first to file is challenging in that your timelines must be fast but the speed at which that data is collected cannot compromise quality. If an unexpected hurdle arises, you need to have a backup plan arranged to keep the study moving in a timely manner. Taking a proactive approach can lead to a successful deliverable.



COMPLEXITY:

First to file studies are complex, so having the expertise to conduct these types of studies is crucial. Additionally, you need highly trained analysts and instrument operators as well as sufficient instrument resources. You must have the technical capability and expertise to develop and validate methods that can perform consistently in order to analyze a high number of samples in the least amount of time possible.

DATA QUALITY ISSUES:

While meeting timelines is a challenge, it's more than the ability to conduct the studies quickly. It's also the aptitude to conduct the studies in a manner that's compliant with regulatory expectations and to achieve high quality data that's required. If the sponsor is first to file with their study but has low quality data, the study is not likely to be accepted.

TRANSPARENT COMMUNICATION:

Continuous open communication between the sponsor and CRO is important to avoid delays during the conduct of the study, but also to head off any potential data issues before the studies are finalized. First to file studies themselves must be taken as a team approach; the sponsor and CRO together must work concurrently during all activities.

FIRST TO FILE SUCCESS: A CASE STUDY

WHAT:

Worldwide Clinical Trials partnered with a sponsor for three studies involving 80 subjects per study.

CHALLENGES:

The studies were dosed during a holiday that required staff to be flexible at all times. In Texas, where our bioanalytical lab and clinical pharmacology unit (CPU) are co-located, we experienced a severe ice storm, which caused issues with getting samples to the lab and with people getting to the lab to do the necessary work. Despite these challenges, the studies were completed almost a full day ahead of the timeline. These three studies had their PK results show that the formulation was not successful. We were able to repeat the three studies just ten days later. In the repeat studies, there was an increased number of subjects, as each study had 100 to 120 subjects per study rather than the original 80 – this subsequently increased the number of samples that were needed to be analyzed as well.

OUTCOME:

The same timelines were met for repeat studies as well and the second set of studies were delivered in record time. The deliverable for the final clinical study report was made within 26 hours after last subject, last visit (LSLV), contrary to the original timeline which allocated 72 hours for that deliverable.

WHY WORLDWIDE EARLY PHASE?

- We have one of the few remaining CPUs in the U.S. willing to conduct first to file studies
- Started conducting first to file studies in 2007
- We can conduct the bioanalysis portion in addition to clinical study conduct
- Our bioanalysis lab is co-located to our CPU, approximately one hour driving distance, allowing quick, reliable turnaround

Worldwide Clinical Trials is a global, midsize contract research organization (CRO) that provides top-performing bioanalytical and Phase I-IV clinical development services to the biotechnology and pharmaceutical industries.

Founded in 1986 by physicians committed to advancing medical science, our full-service clinical experience ranges from early phase and bioanalytical sciences through late phase studies, post approval, and real-world evidence. Major therapeutic areas of focus include cardiovascular, metabolic, neuroscience, oncology, and rare diseases. Operating in 60+ countries with offices in North and South America, Eastern and Western Europe, and Asia, Worldwide is powered by its more than 3,000 employee experts.

For more information, please visit **www.worldwide.com** or connect with us on **Twitter**, **LinkedIn**, **Facebook**, and **Instagram**.