Executing a series of clinical trials efficiently and effectively to get a drug to market on time is no small feat. Drug developers have the expertise and dedication to innovate and run clinical trials, but sometimes can benefit from additional resources to help streamline and/or optimize the process. Functional service providers (FSP) can offer the supplementary tools, technology and talent needed to execute a trial on time and on budget.

When choosing an FSP partner, a drug developer should consider many factors, including:

▶ Global reach
▶ Expertise that can scale up or down on demand
▶ Technology platform flexibility
▶ Staff continuity

FSP resources are typically deployed in either a client-facing model (“Clinical FSP”) or a back-office format (“Clinical Analytics”).

The Clinical FSP model is designed to provide resource flexibility and operational efficiency. The ability, however, to seamlessly adapt to today’s sophisticated clinical trial technology can pose challenges.

Biopharma companies may wish to maintain overall control of their clinical studies, using their own Clinical Trial Management System (CTMS) and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), while remaining fully compliant with regulatory standards. When external full-term equivalent (FTE) resources are deployed, the expectation is that these FTEs will be able to operate and contribute productively and consistently within that framework.

It’s a given that your FSP provider will strive to deliver high-quality recruitment and retention, and adhere to mutually agreed upon Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Key service indicators to consider include: The time to fill and onboard new starts; sponsor rejection rate; voluntary retention rate; quality control as well as audits and regulatory inspections at investigator sites.

What can differentiate an FSP CRO is the ability to design and manage a truly effective on-boarding transition.

Clinical Analytics consists of services such as clinical and lab data management, biostatistics and statistical programming services, data conversion and warehousing (with or without analytics) and visualization. Differentiation in this space can be found in a provider’s technology platform breadth and implementation of data standards such as CDISC.

As sponsors face increasing asset costs coupled with declining ROI, scalability and accountability need to be on point to ensure delivery. FSP models can provide a flexible, cost-effective alternative to clinical trial staffing and biometrics; however, it is important to trust that your FSP partner has retainable talent that can flexibly fit in with the needs of the trial.
About Covance FSPx

Covance has been engaged in global, scalable FSP relationships with biopharmaceutical clients for 30 years in approximately 60 countries across a number of functions, including clinical monitoring, drug safety, regulatory and study management. With an average tenure of 8.5 years, our 4,600+ global staff members offer our clients one of the world’s largest clinical trials – dedicated FSP groups with customized, scalable and global solutions in functional, clinical, technical and laboratory service areas.

Covance continually invests in attracting and retaining the right talent, with an emphasis on cultural fit and business continuity. In our Clinical FSP arm, we successfully on-boarded more than 500 new staff in 2017, and our retention rates are well above the industry average. These engagements range in size from a few dedicated FTE staff to 150+ FTEs across several functional areas, and can last a decade or more. Our extensive resource menu enables you to quickly ramp up or down your staffing levels, optimizing cost distribution without focusing your precious time on recruitment and retention.

Covance Clinical Analytics is supported by a global team of 2,300+ full-time, highly educated and technically skilled staff experienced in providing functionally outsourced clinical & lab data management, biostatistics and statistical programming services to the biopharmaceutical industry. We have partnerships with leading-edge technology providers to offer an unparalleled eClinical suite. While blending the best of BPOs and CROs, Covance Clinical Analytics is solely focused on clinical trials.

Learn more at www.covance.com/FSPx