

60 seconds with...

Ian Stokes



Ian Stokes is a project management specialist, certified facilitator and trainer who delivers process and learning solutions to the pharmaceutical industry. His recent clients include Pfizer, Sanofi Aventis, Nestlé, Danone and Celgene.

He delivers courses on several Master's and MBA courses in France. As chairman of several project user communities in France he believes in a customer-centric approach to projects, with frequent feedback and open teamwork.



In this **60 second interview** we explore the challenging aspects of managing clinical trials...



What are some of the current trends in the clinical research industry and how do you see the industry changing in the future?

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Any changes happening in the clinical research industry will depend on how subcontracting takes place. For instance, when pharma companies subcontract clinical research they are essentially subcontracting the know-how for trial conduct.

Going forward, it is likely some pharma companies will have to do more clinical studies in-house in order to better understand what they are subcontracting.

Why is it important to effectively manage clinical research?

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In order to make sure the correct activities get done to the correct deadlines and comply with the regulations. Also, outside of a regulatory context, meeting these objectives is important for optimising all study procedures and ensuring the correct medical research outcome.

In your experience, what would you say are the most challenging aspects of managing a clinical trial?

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If you were to ask both the pharma sponsors and the CROs, they'd both say communication is the biggest challenge. Often this can result in a pharma company delegating risky study activities to a CRO who is not adequately prepared to deal with them.

Patient recruitment is also challenging, due to the regulations, recruiters often see this as a restraint as opposed to an opportunity.

How does your course 'Effectively Applying Project Management to Clinical Studies' prepare delegates for managing clinical trials?

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This course takes delegates through the whole project life-cycle and gets them to understand important aspects such as: why are we doing this project, drug development milestones and why it is important to do clinical trials.

What are your top three tips to effectively manage clinical research?

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1. Partnering & teamwork is crucial in order to share information and get important data as soon as possible
2. Be optimistic, but sceptical. Often unexpected events can occur during study trials
3. Have contingency plans to be prepared for all situations

Effectively Applying Project Management to Clinical Studies is a 4-week online course starting 2 May 2022

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