89% of trials meet enrollment, but timelines slip, half of sites under-enroll

Tufts CSDD study creates benchmark to help plan and manage trials

- The highest site activation rates are in Western Europe (93%), Eastern Europe (92%), and Asia/Pacific (91%).
- Enrollment achievement rates vary by region, ranging from 75% to 98% of targeted levels, with Asia/Pacific and Latin America having the highest achievement rates.
- Study timelines are typically extended to nearly double their original duration to meet desired enrollment levels for all therapeutic areas.
- 11% of sites in a given trial fail to enroll a single patient, 37% under-enroll, 39% meet their enrollment targets, and 13% exceed their targets.
- Nearly one-third (32%) of studies do not receive centralized recruitment support.
- Centralized recruitment and retention programs utilize traditional tactics, such as physician referrals and newspaper, television, and radio ads, and tend to avoid non-traditional approaches.

Patient recruitment and retention are among the greatest challenges that clinical researchers throughout the industry face today and are a major cause of drug development delays. Despite this widely shared challenge, to date little evidence has been gathered to characterize the use of patient recruitment and retention practices and to benchmark their impact.

Results of a Tufts CSDD study, summarized in this report, paint a complex picture of enrollment targets being met under extended study timelines and a high prevalence of poor investigative site performance. Most strikingly, perhaps, is that sponsors and contract research organizations (CROs) rely mostly on a limited number of traditional tactics and have yet to adopt non-traditional methods. The benchmarks developed by this initial study will help clinical research professionals better plan and manage clinical trials. Future studies will look at gathering more detailed measures of the impact of various tactics and the adoption of non-traditional methods.