



How DZS Clinical Services made a data entry nightmare... all better!

The Situation: A large client had been conducting infectious disease studies worldwide for several years and had collected patient data on hundreds of patients and thousands of paper CRFs.

The Problem: Unfortunately, because the patient data was collected at a variety of sites and in different ways, the CRF data wasn't documented or presented consistently, making efficient double key data entry difficult. The data entry forms for the studies did not follow best practices for insuring rapid data input, often requiring the staff to reference ancillary data, jump from one place on the form to another or switch from straight text entry to mouse/click check boxes. While this may seem trivial, when data entry people have to change focus or switch from one method of entry to another, or look elsewhere for information, the resulting time loss can be significant especially across data entry groups who are on a strict timeline! The client understandably asked DZS Clinical Services to provide some expertise and assistance in order to complete this project on-time and within budget.

Solution: DZS Clinical Services, with over 25 years of experience in data management and a professional team of skilled employees, assigned a Project Manager, a data manager and data entry people, who were quickly briefed on the requirements of the project and the expected timeline. Over the course of three weeks, data was entered remotely into the Client's system continuously from several thousand CRF pages. As the data managers became familiar with the project and some of the complexities of the data entry task emerged, improvements to the screen design were suggested for future screen design. Because of the speed with which the first phase of the project was done, the client decided to give DZS thousands more pages, more than quadrupling the original task. These additional pages were completed ahead of schedule, within budget and excellent quality.

The Future: Because the project was performed by skilled and experienced data management and data entry professionals, common bottlenecks were avoided and the project went much smoother and was completed earlier than if the client enlisted the aid of inexperienced data management and data entry staff. As a result of completing the project earlier than expected, clean data was available earlier in the process for analysis and some immediate findings as to what medications and dosages were more effective for treatment of the disease were realized. Additionally, with suggestions from DZS as to how to more efficiently prepare screens and organize fields for input, data entry in future studies will be more rapid and efficient, cost less and allow research personnel to gain earlier visibility to future data, gain competitive advantage and realize greater return on their clinical research investment.

About DZS: DZS Clinical (www.dzs.com) is a full-service data management and biostatistics focused CRO located in Bound Brook, NJ. We utilize our state-of-the-art clinical software to optimize data and information flow and report presentation. With very low employee turnover, we maintain a highly experienced and dedicated team of data managers, statistical programmers, medical writers and other clinical and biostatistics professionals who operate as a team and are familiar with client needs.