Interview with Zane Fridrihsone, CRA and Lead CTA at Illingworth Research

ILLINGWORTH RESEARCH GROUP

What is your background?

I began my career working as a Clinical Trials Administrator and did this for 3 and a half years. During my time in the NHS, I was able to progress from junior to senior CTA. However, my goal to become a Clinical Research Associate was not as accessible through larger organisations.

Why did you join Illingworth?

Once I found Illingworth, joining a smaller team made sense and meant that there was plenty of room for faster and more achievable career progression. I became part of a supportive and experienced team.

What is your everyday role as a CTA?

I support project managers across various clinical trials. My main duties include maintaining study documentation, ensuring documents are correct and up-to-date, and communicating efficiently with the team when there are amendments to be made.

How many projects do you work on?

When I first started at Illingworth, I began working on only one project. Now, this typically varies between 1 and 7. However, this differs based on study size. For example, a project involving 40 sites would require my full time attention.

"I love the variety of my role and its an exciting time to work for an expanding team!".

What's been the most interesting part of your job?

Some of our projects include cough monitor management. I am currently the UK/EU project manager for these studies This involves a lot of logistics including stock control, items needed per site and shipping timelines. I also upload the cough monitor data from the devices once they are shipped back to us, making me a vital part of the project.

As you are dealing with a lot of confidential information, how do you ensure that this is kept private?

We have an inbox for study documents. Only the CTAs who are working on the study will have access to it to ensure that everything is kept confidential. For example, our Trial Master File (TMF) is on a secure portal with a password-controlled log in. Those that wish to access it will have to go through the relevant process to gain permissions. Any paper documents are safely filed away in a secure fireproof safe.

What is the process involved in starting a new project?

We undergo training for each new project. These consist of study kick-off meetings which outline the background of the trial including the scientific background and gaining an understanding of the logistics of protocol. It is helpful for us to understand the research objectives and design of the study. For example, if the clinical trial is randomised instead of open label this will help us know which documentation to expect.

What do you like most about working at Illingworth?

The training programme at Illingworth has been fantastic and has meant that my day-to-day duties as a CTA have been extremely varied. I enjoy working here and it is an exciting time to be part of the Illingworth team as the clinical operations team continues to expand and progress.