Are research sites at their breaking point?

Solving burnout and tech overload in clinical research with easy-to-use tech

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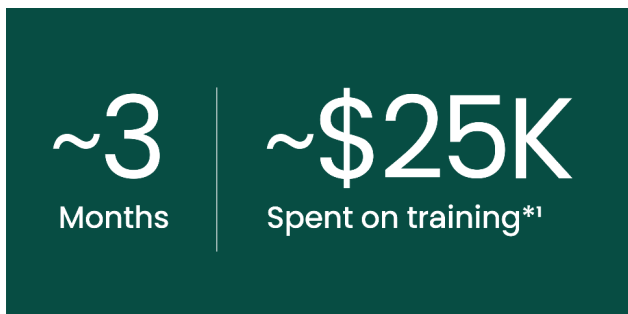
Research teams today rely on a vast electronic ecosystem: software, application and spreadsheets all housing diverse, complex data. And yet, while having multiple tools is intended to support productivity, research staff are instead experiencing "technology overload". It's no wonder that it can take three months and cost $25,000 to train a new clinical research professional.[*1] The learning curve is high because sites may log into more than six platforms for an average study.[*2] And this doesn't account for the fact that teams often manage multiple studies at once!

How has the clinical research industry reached this point? In what other profession is it routinely acceptable for employees to learn a double-digit number of systems just to get through their workday? True, the research workforce has shown remarkable adaptability, but the industry may be reaching a threshold, if not there already. The "Great Resignation" hasn't left the clinical research industry unscathed, putting sites into a tailspin. It's crystal clear, too many hard-to-use technologies for understaffed teams is a perfect recipe for employee turnover and burnout.

It doesn't have to be this way. To address technology overload and burnout, sites should:

- Adopt an advanced clinical trial management system (CTMS), and
- Ensure they invest in a CTMS that's intuitive and easy to use.

Verily Viewpoint Site CTMS (formerly SignalPath by Verily) has all of these attributes in an advanced, easy-to-use CTMS.

~3 Months | **~$25K** Spent on training[*1]	**24–29%** Clinical research turnover rate[*1]

Clinical Research training
is time consuming and costly

Compared to average
U.S. turnover rate: 15%

What is a CTMS and how can it address tech overload?

A CTMS is a site-centric solution that can help simplify research operations, from study planning to close.[*3] As a central hub, a CTMS is crucial for improving overall site efficiency. A CTMS also helps address burnout symptoms by eliminating tedious tasks that slow down – and bog down – your staff. Keep in mind, not all CTMS options are created equal.

An advanced, effective CTMS should:

- Digitize protocols, translating pdf protocols and configuring study workflows within the CTMS software so sites don't have to
- Eliminate redundant tasks by seamlessly integrating with other systems
- Easily visualize and track both study and site revenue and overall financial health

In other words, a CTMS improves research site operations and workflow handoffs by acting as a single source of truth across all stakeholders.
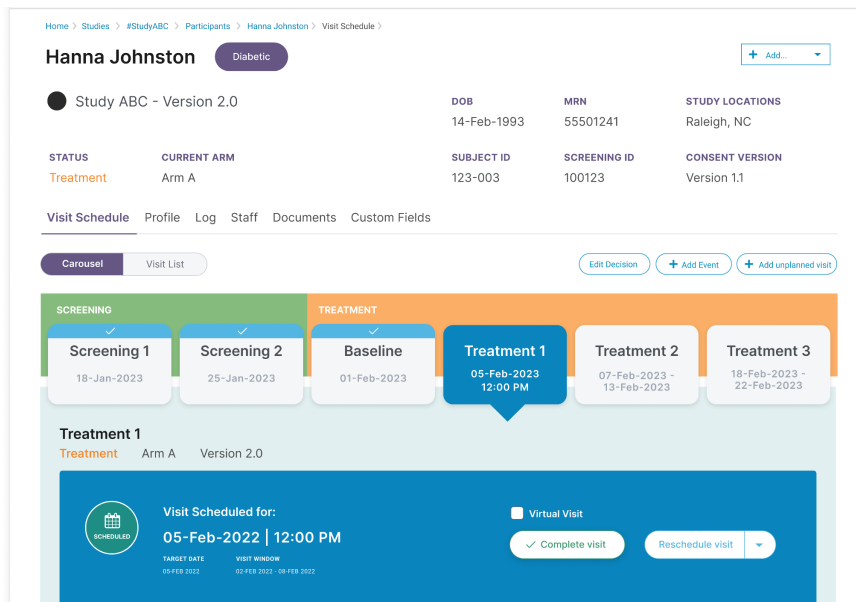

Figure A.
Site CTMS is a state-of-the-art clinical trial management system for research sites that digitizes study protocols and eliminates siloed manual processes to enable high-quality research and maximize research revenue.

Why is a user-friendly CTMS key for research burnout?

Software alone isn't enough to truly combat burnout in clinical research. The user-friendliness of health technologies – or rather, the lack thereof – can worsen staff burnout and turnover within clinical research, endangering the ability of sites to deliver.

To understand the importance of easy-to-use technologies, like Site CTMS, consider these factors that could be at-risk without it: quality and safety, cost containment and optimal productivity.

Quality and safety

Studies suggest that "clinicians who work in multiple care settings using disparate technologies may struggle with the differences in interface design, with adverse impact on patient safety".[*4] In a world where research teams are working in many different systems, sub-par design can impede accurate data collection, adversely impact the precision of research and ultimately, expose participants to unnecessary risk.

Cost containment

Given the proliferation of various clinical technologies, site teams waste a significant portion of their valuable time on system training, when they could be focused on actual research.

Ask yourself, what is the use of buying any eClinical technology with all the bells and whistles if these features are difficult to find, sync and use?

Optimal productivity

Intuitive technology can also influence productivity. "Well-designed interfaces speed work, while poorly designed interfaces steal minutes from busy schedules".[*4] This is critical for research organizations managing weary staff and facing costly onboarding from high turnover.

What makes Site CTMS easy to use?

The pillars of user-friendly technology are effectiveness, efficiency and satisfaction of the intended user.[*5] If that last piece – user satisfaction – is overlooked when investing in a CTMS, it may come at a literal cost to research teams.

Site CTMS is an intuitive and easy-to-use solution developed for researchers, by researchers. From Verily's Google and Alphabet heritage, we bring best-in-class user experience (UX) practices and principles to build the most intuitive, accessible workflows possible. It can be the answer for research and finance teams who are frustrated with clunky, outdated systems.

The Site CTMS ensures your team can experience:

- Precisely the right information for each team member
- Key information within a click or two
- Minimal context shifting

Read on as we detail these key product and performance features.

Precisely the right information for each team member

Managing a clinical studies portfolio requires coordination among members of the research, finance, regulatory and leadership teams.

With this in mind, Site CTMS helps teams implement intuitive workflows by serving the right level of information to each stakeholder.

Figure B., and C. depicts just one way Site CTMS assists different team members and their specific workflows.
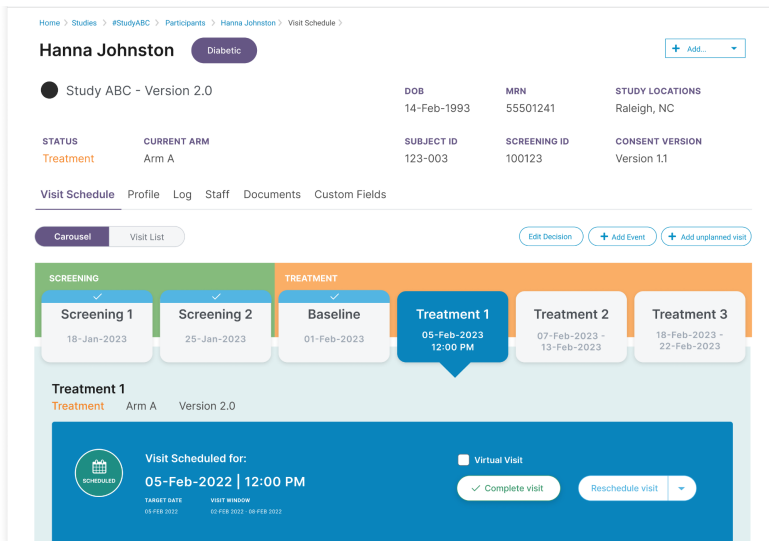
Figure B.
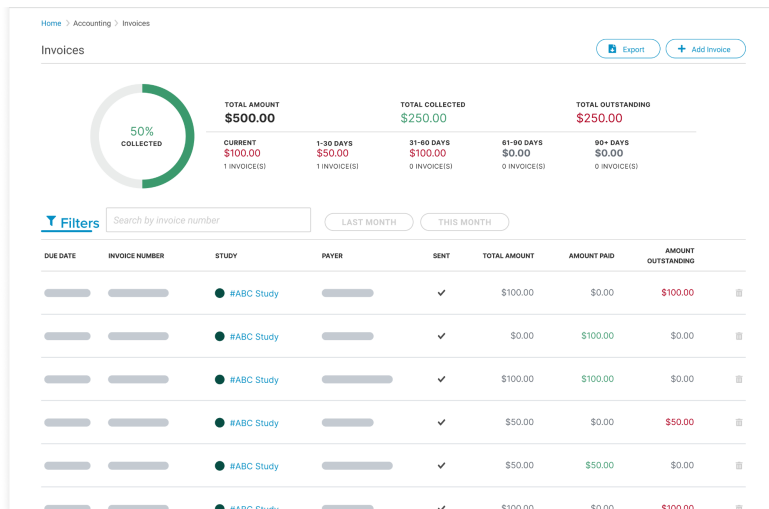Researchers can quickly forecast daily and weekly flow of patient schedules from one screen.

Figure C.
Finance can easily audit a study's running accounts payable and receivable in one viewpoint.

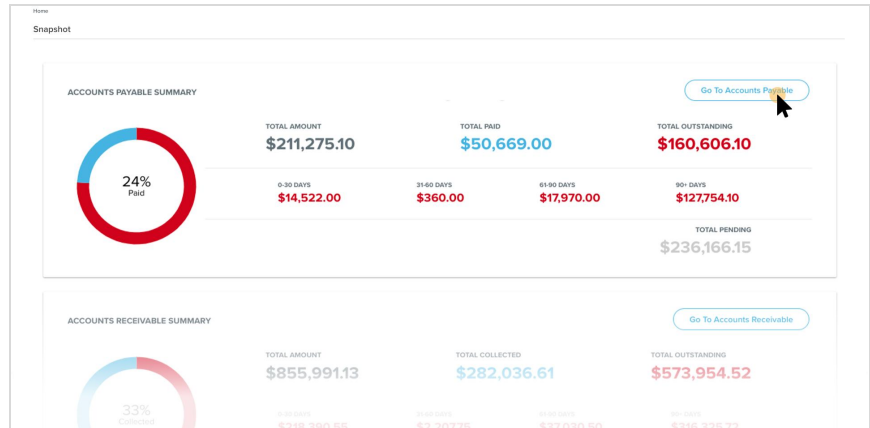## Key information within a click or two

Trying to remember where links are located, like under which tab, and playing a game of tag to navigate to the right screen is a huge waste of time. An easy-to-use CTMS should surface all key information within a few clicks of the current screen. Site CTMS does just that.
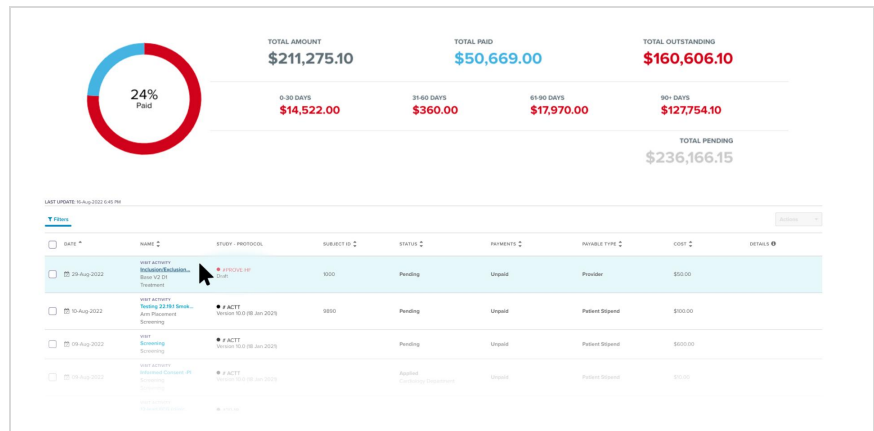
Consider this time-saving example:

1

Site CTMS allows a financial analyst to reconcile accounts by navigating from a topline, consolidated view to all the recently entered receivables — **in one click.**

2

With just one more click, they see exactly for which study and participant the receivable came from.

Minimal context shifting

Given the numerous technologies sites use to manage their studies, reviewing clinical trial documents can be painful when reconciling different versions across disparate systems. Site CTMS has intuitively-designed interfaces that help reduce "context shifting" by acting as a single source of truth where documents and contacts can be shared and easily communicated.

Site CTMS also houses all study documents and contacts. Users can send files with comments to anybody on the platform. This feature also ensures data security, circumventing third-party emailing systems that may violate data policies. View key examples in Figures D through G.

While a CTMS may offer many features that streamline workflows and study operations, it's not enough to address burnout. To truly ease the work of an overwhelmed research staff, software needs to make the job easier, not harder. Essentially, technology needs to work for people, not the other way around.

Site CTMS liberates research staff from time spent in frustration over operating and managing the capabilities of their tools, and enables more time caring for patients and conducting research.
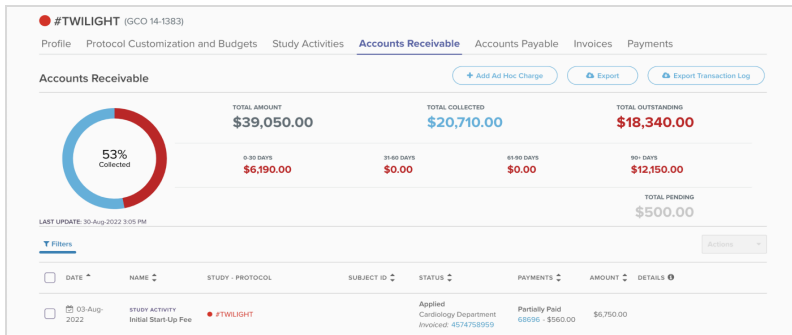

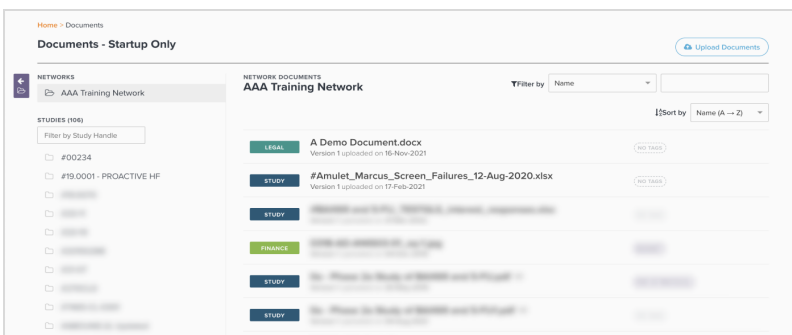**Figure D.**
Key information at the study level in a single screen

Figure E.
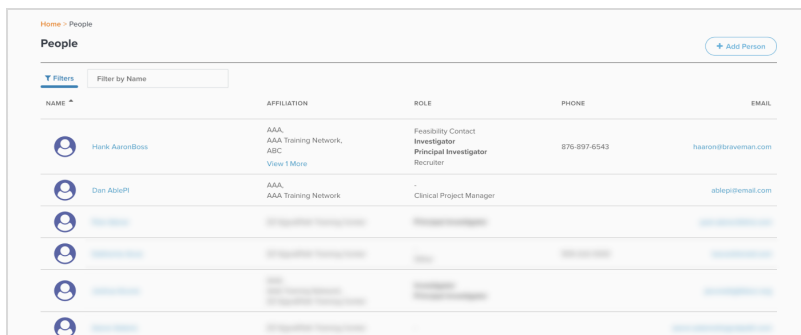Filter and view documents all in one place

Figure F.
Easily search a single directory of your internal team members
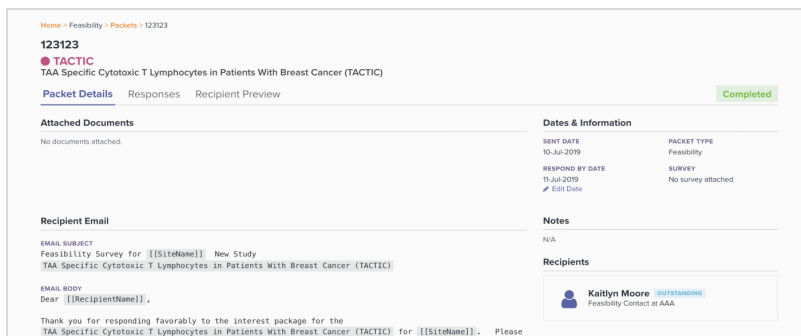

Figure G.
Email feasibility packets directly within Site CTMS with automated attachments

Connect with us. Connect with our solution.

Consider Verily Viewpoint Site CTMS to simplify and empower research operations. Advanced technology and platform features optimize and streamline management from study start to close for your research, finance and leadership teams.

Connect with us for details tailored to your enterprise site. Until then, **find out more** on how Verily Viewpoint Site CTMS can help alleviate team burnout and tech overload.

Sources
[1] What does a modern Clinical Research Coordinator do, and how can technology help?
[2] 2022 State of Clinical Trial Operations Technology Report
[3] Re-engineering a Clinical Trial Management System Using Blockchain Technology: System Design, Development, and Case Studies
[4] Enhancing patient safety and quality of care by improving the usability of electronic health record systems: recommendations from AMIA
[5] International standards for HCI and usability