



For Immediate Release

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The Avoca Group Holds Quality Summit to Debate Adoption of Quality Standards

Pharmaceutical, Biotechnology, and Clinical Research Provider Executives Meet to Create Efficiencies and Increase Quality in Clinical Trials.

PRINCETON, NJ (May 23, 2012) – [The Avoca Group](#), an industry-leading consulting and research organization specializing in clinical outsourcing and alliance management, conducted its inaugural [Quality Summit](#) May 1 and 2 in New Brunswick, NJ. This two-day meeting was the official kickoff of an industry-wide [Avoca Quality Consortium](#), which brings together quality assurance, outsourcing and operational professionals from member pharma, biotech and Contract Research Organizations (CROs) to accelerate the development of a best practice approach to quality management and CRO oversight.

The Quality Summit engaged 95 senior executives from some of the industry's largest pharmaceutical companies, including Pfizer, Eli Lilly, Amgen and GlaxoSmithKline, and the industry's leading clinical service providers in discussions on provocative topics concerning the development of standards and the best ways to ensure quality in outsourced clinical trials. The consensus is clear: The industry must move toward standard definitions of quality in outsourced clinical trials. However, some participants cautioned that not all procedures can be standardized. They also warned that too much standardization could potentially lower quality standards required of Contract Research Organizations and potentially lower overall quality in particular trials. In addition, they discussed challenges with implementation of standards. The importance of incorporating standards into the governance of outsourced trials was emphasized.

The Quality Consortium members reviewed a proposed standard Quality Agreement template developed by Avoca and discussed the top metrics that could be used to ensure consistent quality standards are being met. The Avoca Quality Consortium will finalize the standards for a Quality Agreement template and quality metrics based on member input by July 2012. Avoca will form working groups to tackle some of these challenges and will collaborate with and provide the documents associated with quality metrics to the Metrics Champion Consortium.

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“We are certain that the development of standards for quality management, particularly in the area of defining expectations for quality and measuring quality, will have a significant, positive impact on the industry in terms of ensuring efficiency while focusing on maintaining high quality,” said Patricia Leuchten, president and CEO of The Avoca Group. “We know that adoption of standards has been historically challenging and that is why we chose to focus on this as an area of discussion and debate. We are encouraged by the level of commitment and interest by our members to move toward standard approaches, and I’m pleased that Avoca can serve as a catalyst for this change and provide the venue for bringing sponsors and CROs together to discuss this important topic.”

To inquire about membership in the Quality Consortium, please contact [Caryn Laermer](#), +1 (609) 799-0511, or visit the Avoca Quality Summit website at <http://theavocagroup.com/QualityConsortium>.

About The Avoca Group

[The Avoca Group](#) is an industry-leading organization providing survey research, consulting services and training in the areas of clinical outsourcing, business development, strategic alliances and client service. Founded by industry veteran Patricia Leuchten in 1999, the company works exclusively in the health care industry and has a focus on relationship management.

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