Quality Control
and
Quality Assurance
in Clinical Trial

Pravich Tanyasittisuntorn, MD, MSc in Pharm Med

Why quality matters

- "Good Clinical Practice (GCP) is an international ethical and scientific quality standard for designing, conducting, recording, and reporting trials that involve the participation of human subjects.

  Compliance with this standard provides public assurance that:

  – the rights, safety, and well-being of trial subjects are protected and that the clinical trial data are credible."

(Introduction to ICH–GCP)

Quality is teamwork

There are many people/groups involved in the regulation and quality of clinical trials

- **Investigator and study team**
  - protocol compliance
  - standard processes
  - regulations
- **Sponsor**
  - quality control & quality assurance: on-site monitoring & audit
  - SOPs
- **Regulatory authorities**
  - inspections
- **Data protection agencies**
  - inspections
- **IRB/IEC**
  - continuing review

Sponsor's role in Quality Assurance

- Sponsor is responsible for
  - Implementing & maintaining quality assurance (QA) and quality control (QC) with written SOP's (ICH-GCP 5.1.1)
  - Securing agreement from investigator/institution and/or with any other parties on direct access to all trial-related sites, source data/documents, and reports **for monitoring, auditing, and inspection** (ICH-GCP 5.1.2)
  - Applying QC to each stage of data handling (ICH-GCP 5.1.3)

Should be in writing
(ICH-GCP 5.1.4)

- Permission to examine, analyze, verify, and reproduce any records and reports that are important to evaluation of a clinical trial.
- Confidentiality of subjects' identities and sponsor's proprietary information should be maintain

(ICH-GCP 1.21)

Quality Control VS Quality Assurance

	QC	QA
Role	▪ Part of the study conduct to ensure quality	▪ Third-party assurance of quality
Responsible persons	▪ Study team ▪ Monitor	▪ Independent unit of sponsor organization ▪ Auditor
Activities **Timing**	▪ Monitoring ▪ Study duration	▪ Audit : systemic & independent examination ▪ One time point: routine & for cause
Summary	▪ Procedures that ensure that the process is in control and ▪ "makes things correctly"	▪ Procedures that verify that QC procedures are effective and ▪ "the correct things are made"

Monitoring

Who is the monitor?

- A team member
- A data-checker
- Someone who checks the site team's work

Introduction to monitor

- a professional
- a valuable resource and partner to the study team
- the main line of communication between the sponsor and the investigator
- a key contact for trial-related issues

Monitor (1)

- Trial monitoring
  - Purposes: (ICH-GCP 5.18.1)
    1. Right and well-being of human subjects are protected
    2. Trial data are accurate, complete, and verifiable from source documents
    3. Conduct of trial complies with current approved protocol, GCP, applicable regulatory requirements
  - Monitors: (ICH-GCP 5.18.2)
    - Appointed by sponsor
    - Qualified
    - Thoroughly familiar with study drug, protocol, ICF, SOPs, GCP, applicable regulatory requirements

Monitor (2)

- Monitor's responsibilities (ICH-GCP 5.18.4)
  - Main line of communication between sponsor and investigator
  - Verify
    - investigator & site staff qualification
    - adequacy of resources/facilities
    - appropriate storage of drug
    - use of study drug
      - perform drug accountability document review and reconciliation

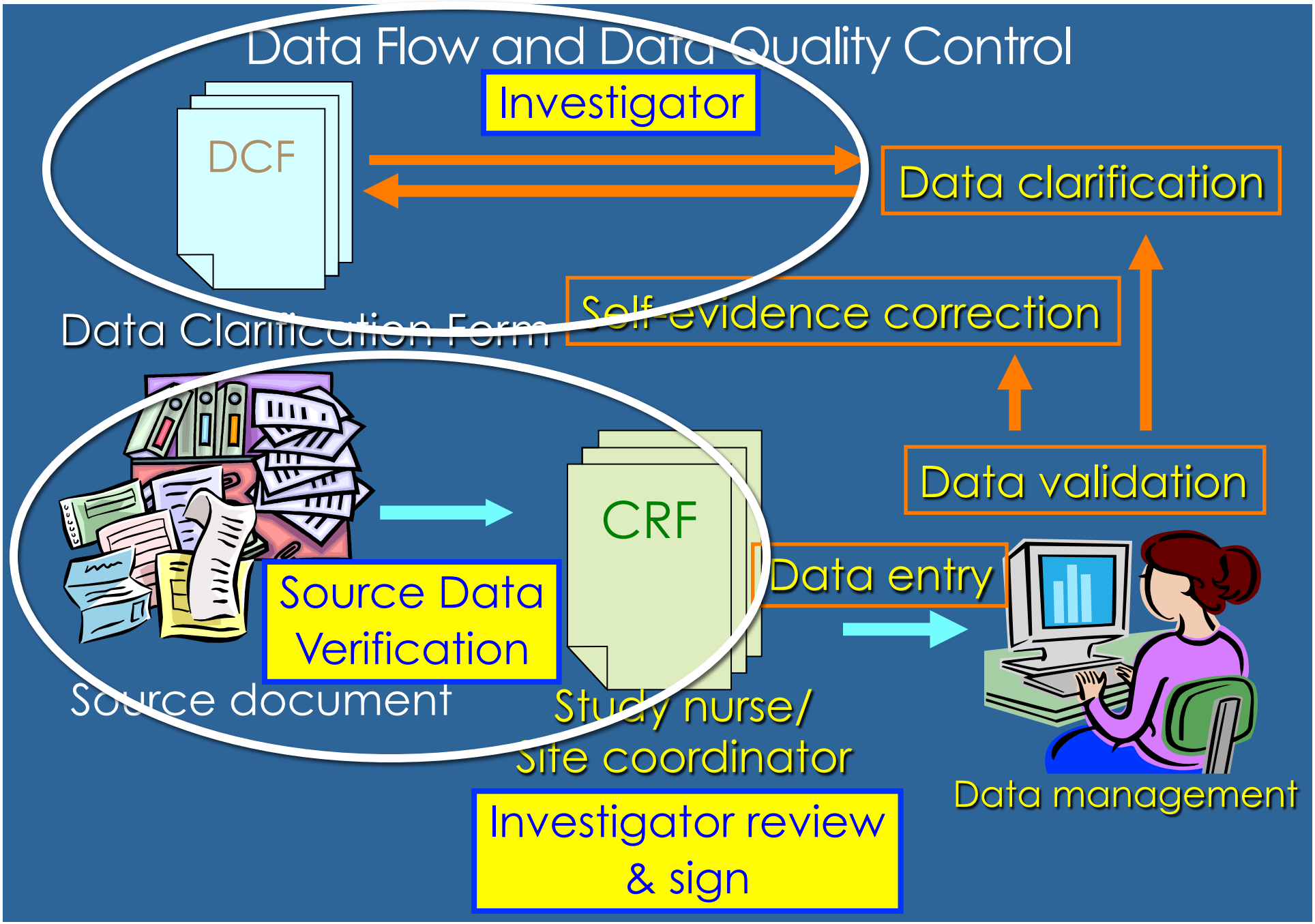
Monitor (3)

- Monitor's responsibilities (ICH-GCP 5.18.4)
  - Verify
    - compliance to protocol, GCP, SOP, and applicable regulatory requirements,
      - communicate or take appropriate action to correct and/or prevent the deviations
    - time of ICF obtained
    - eligibility of participating subjects
  - Track subject recruitment and retention

Monitor (4)

- Monitor's responsibilities (ICH-GCP 5.18.4)
  - Ensure
    - safety report complied with protocol, IEC, GCP, SOP, and applicable regulatory requirements
    - accuracy and completeness of the CRF entries, source data/documents, and other trial-related records
    - appropriate correction, addition, or deletion of CRF entry
    - all essential documents are complete, kept up-to-date, and maintained

Data Flow and Data Quality Control



Monitor (4)

- Monitor's responsibilities (ICH-GCP 5.18.4)
  - Ensure
    - communication between investigator and IRB/ IEC complied with GCP, SOP and applicable regulatory requirements
      - protocol (protocol amendment) approval
      - safety reporting
      - protocol violation (if required)
      - study progress report
      - study completion/termination
      - final study report

Monitoring Visit

- Types of site monitoring
  1. Pre-trial site assessment (Pre-study visit)
  2. Study initiation visit
  3. Monitoring visit (Periodic visit)
  4. Study close-out visit
- Monitoring Procedures (ICH GCP 5.18.5)
  - follow the sponsor's SOPs and those procedures specified for monitoring a specific trial (Monitoring Guidelines).

Frequency of monitoring visit

- The number and timing of monitoring visits is dependent on:

Study issues

- Study objectives
- Study design
- Phase of clinical trial: early phase
- Complexity
- Blinding
- Size: # of subjects, sites
- Study endpoints: mortality
- Data collection

Site issues

- Experience of the investigator and study team
- Logistics
- Problems encountered: protocol & GCP compliance
- Number of subjects enrolled

- The frequency of visits will also vary before, during, and after the study

Monitoring visit

- Before a monitoring visit, make sure that

PI/staff are available to answer questions

Documents are available for review and SDV

Space is available for the duration of the visit

Time is scheduled for the visit

Audit & Inspection

Differences between audit and inspection

	Audits	Inspections
Who conducts them?	Independent unit of the sponsor company	Regulatory authorities, IRB/IEC, Data Protection Agencies
What do they check?	Trial conduct and compliance with: • protocol • ICH–GCP • regulatory requirements	
When do they occur?	Any time before, during, or after the trial	
Why do they take place?	• randomly • for cause	
How can you help?	• follow the protocol • document and file everything	

Audit: Purpose & Type

- Audit
  - Purpose: (ICH-GCP 5.19.1)
    - To evaluate trial conduct and compliance with the protocol, SOPs, GCP, and applicable regulatory requirements
    - Independent of and separating from QC
  - Type of audit
    - Routine/surveillance audit
    - For-cause audit

Audit is a learning process & a part of continuous process improvement

Audit: SOP & Audit Plan

- Audit (cont.)
  - Procedures: (ICH-GCP 5.19.3)
    - SOP: indicate what to audit, how to audit, the frequency of audits, and the forms and content of audit reports
    - Audit plan: guided by
      - importance of trial to submission to regulatory authorities,
      - no. of enrolled subject,
      - type & complexity of trial,
      - level of risk to the trial subjects,
      - any identified problem(s)

Audit Process

- Audit
  - Process:
    - Scheduling of audit/inspection
    - Pre-audit review of sponsor file (by sponsor auditors)
    - Opening meeting
    - Review of study conduct
    - Discussions with the investigator and site staff
    - Closing meeting
    - Issuing the report : findings/observations (critical, major, minor)

Audit Process

- Audit
  - Process:
    - Follow-up of development and implementation of the corrective and preventive action plan (CAPA) until all findings/observations resolved
    - Closing the audit

Audit Process

- Audit
  - Procedures: (ICH-GCP 5.19.3)
    - Regulatory authorities (RA) should not routinely request the audit reports
      - RA may seek access to an audit report when serious of GCP noncompliance exists or in the course of legal proceedings

Possible outcomes of audits/inspections

Minor observation	• Deviations/deficiencies will not adversely affect subjects/data, but should be dealt with appropriately
Major observation	• The quality/integrity of data or rights and safety of subjects may be adversely affected if practices continue
Critical observation	• The quality/integrity of data or rights and safety of subjects are adversely affected

The type of observation will determine the action taken by the sponsor or regulatory authority

Possible outcomes of audits/inspections

- USFDA Inspection Classification
  - NAI: No action indicated
    - No objectionable conditions or findings
  - VAI: Voluntary action indicated
    - Objectionable condition or findings
    - But not at threshold to take or recommend administrative or regulatory actions
  - OAI: Official action indicated
    - Serious objectionable conditions
    - Regulatory action recommended: warning, disqualified

Common observations in audits & inspections

- Non-compliance with protocol
- Informed consent problems
- Inadequate/missing source documents/CRF
- Inadequate record keeping
- Inadequate IRB/IEC communication & documentation
- Qualification & inappropriate delegation; inadequate PI oversight
- Inappropriate drug storage & accountability; Inadequate safety reporting
- Fraud/misconduct

Falsification of data

- **Consequences of falsification:**
  - places study subjects at risk
  - jeopardizes the reliability of submitted and/or published data
  - investigators will not be selected by sponsors
  - legal action:
    - fine
    - imprisonment
    - loss of medical license

You're ready

- If processes are being followed correctly at the site then
  - the investigator and study team should not be concerned about the occurrence of monitoring, an audit, or an inspection

- "Understand, inspections are important but nevertheless routine and nothing to be alarmed about."

US FDA

You're ready

Audit or inspection…..a fact finding, not a fault finding process !

What is not documented…dose not exist !

Question & Answer

Thank You