WHAT'S IT LIKE TO BE A CLINICAL TRIAL STATISTICIAN?

The CTU Network is an independent organisation dedicated to providing support for Registered CTUs undertaking non-commercial and investigator-led clinical trials both in the UK and overseas. The Network spans the entirety of the UK and participates in national & international clinical research initiatives.

UK Registered Clinical Trials Unit Network

What can YOU expect in an academic statistics role?

Laura Finneran, ICR-CTSU



My name is Laura Finneran and I work as a trial statistician at the ICR Clinical Trials and Statistics Unit (ICR-CTSU) in London.

What's your background? After getting an MSc in Medical Statistics, I worked for two years in process monitoring. However, I realised this was not an area I wanted to pursue and kept coming back to much I had enjoyed the clinical trial aspects of my MSc and decided to make a change. I was lucky enough to get a role as a trial statistician at ICR-CTSU and have been working here for 6 years.

What do you do in a typical week? The work of a trial statistician is very varied, we are involved from the design of the trial to publishing results. No two weeks are the same. My responsibilities include developing statistical analysis plans, monitoring trial data, conducting interim and final analyses, preparing reports for data monitoring committees, and contributing to scientific manuscripts and conference presentations.

What do you like best about your job? I enjoy working in a multidisciplinary environment and doing your bit in a trial that makes a difference is really rewarding. It is a big push, and stressful at times, but once the results are out there and can make an impact for future patients, it is all worth it.

What next for you? My aim is to continue refining my expertise in statistical analysis, design methodologies, and data integrity, with the goal of contributing to clinical trials that improve health outcomes.

Any advice to share? My advice to something thinking about becoming a trial statistician is to always be open to learning about new ideas. There are always new methodologies, trial designs or analysis methods to explore. Doing research on a new idea and working as a team to implement it, at a trial or even a unit level can be really rewarding.

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