The African Clinical Research Organisation (ACRO) helps local and international companies develop their healthcare products in order to bring them to patients and the market as economically and as quickly as possible. Based in South Africa, the company’s multi-skilled and experienced team is mobilised quickly, and with one point of accountability, to offer services tailored to client needs across the African continent.

These services are grouped into five departments:
- Regulatory Affairs
- Clinical Trial Management & Monitoring
- Medical Affairs
- Data Management
- Training & Capacity Building

The Training & Capacity Building Department

The Training & Capacity Building Department joins with the four other service areas to ensure clients receive an integrated service tailored to their needs.

The functional team has extensive experience in the clinical trials environment, in clinical trial management, monitoring, and training for a number of multinational and local organisations. This uniquely and adequately qualifies the team to provide training that is relevant and easily implemented in the workplace.

The team has performed accompanied site visits with junior monitoring staff and conducted training in Botswana, Malawi, South Africa, Rwanda, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

The Department Head is accredited as facilitator and assessor of the South African Qualification Authority’s (SAQA) Education and Training Development Practice (ETDP), a Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA).

Services offered by the Department

ACRO is committed to building clinical research capacity on the African continent and has developed a range of training courses and services to meet this need.

Good Clinical Practice Training

ACRO’s GCP training for investigative sites includes both theoretical and practical components. Delegates are exposed to theory, role play, group work, and individual learning exercises. This introductory 2 day course is aimed at site personnel at a beginner to intermediate level of clinical trial experience.

Wherever possible, study specific materials are used to optimise learning relevant to the clinical trial about to be undertaken.

ACRO also provides 1 day refresher GCP courses.

Each course is based on Local and International GCP and other local regulatory requirements as applicable; instruction on FDA regulations is added when required.

ACRO also provides introductory and refresher GCP training for Clinical Research Associates (CRA) and other members of the clinical team.

The GCP courses are accredited in South Africa and carry continued professional development (CPD) points.
Clinical Research Associate (CRA) Training

The ACRO CRA training courses are accredited by the South African Medical Association.

The courses consists of theoretical and practical components.

- ACRO basic monitoring course for individuals who have at least six month experience in the research environment, and who have an industry recognised tertiary qualification. This course is divided into three stages of a two week classroom session, six month vocational training at the workplace, with at least one accompanied site visit by the ACRO trainer, and another five day classroom session to complete the course.
- ACRO 5 day Clinical Research Associate (CRA) course aimed at individuals who have at least one year’s trial experience, and who have an industry recognised tertiary qualification. The course concentrates on the roles and responsibilities of a CRA.

Project Management for Clinical Trials

A 3 day course aimed at individuals who are currently employed in the clinical trial environment, ideally in a managerial position or who will be taking up such a position in the near future. The training includes both theoretical and practical components and its main focus is on project management within the clinical research environment.

Senior Clinical Research Associate (SCRA) Training

ACRO’s SCRA training includes both theoretical and practical components focusing on higher level skills required by SCRAs such as conducting feasibility studies and accompanied site visits, and soft skills. This 2 day course is aimed at individuals who have a minimum of three years experience as a CRA and who have performed monitoring visits at each stage of a clinical trial, and submitted applications to the local Regulatory Authorities.

Clinical Trial Assistant/Administrator (CTA) Training

This 2-day course is for individuals involved in providing administrative support in clinical trials. The course expands on how administrative activities contribute to the success or failure of a clinical trial, and provides delegates with a broader overview of the clinical trial process, and tips on how to maximise their efficiency and effectiveness.

Data Management Training

ACRO provides training modules designed to empower data managers. These include:
- Introduction to Data Management
- Advanced Data Management
- Understanding and complying with CFR21 Part 11

Trial Site Development and Training

Working with the site and sponsor, ACRO’s experienced team offers training and mentoring to potential and established clinical trial sites. The training is modular and can therefore be adapted to meet the specific needs of a site to ensure trial preparedness.

ACRO can develop a start-up site or provide focused training to consolidate the knowledge of staff at an established site. Development assistance may include identifying facility and staffing needs, sourcing site infrastructure, assisting in the creation of site processes and SOPs, drafting job descriptions, and other activities.

Training blends theory and practice, and may include, amongst other areas and topics, the following: administrative training; monitor training and mentoring; the conduct of noninterventional protocols; the establishment of Community Advisory Boards; participant recruitment and retention; and GCP support.

Local input is sought to ensure that all training that is given is implementable, and all suggested solutions are feasible.

To find out how our training and capacity building services can benefit you, call Birgit Hohl on +27 (0)11 267-2250 or e-mail her on birgit.hohl@acro.co.za.