



EDITORIAL

Queensland Clinical Trials Network Inc. (QCTN) - Australia's one-stop-shop that helps identify the most appropriate clinical research and development service providers by applying a "best-of-breed" approach

About QCTN

Queensland Clinical Trials Network Inc. (QCTN) is based in Queensland, Australia and was established in 2005 by the Queensland Government as part of its Smart State Initiative. It is an incorporated association of Queensland based, life sciences research organisations and related entities. QCTN itself does not conduct any form of clinical research; rather, QCTN is an 'umbrella organisation'.

As a primary point of contact for domestic and international organisations seeking to undertake preclinical and clinical research in Australia, QCTN helps identify and connect organisations (sponsors) with appropriate research institutions, hospitals, CROs and other life sciences service providers - QCTN has more than 55 of these organisations as members.

QCTN has established an independent Institutional Bio-safety Committee (IBC) to assist members and sponsors undertake early clinical research involving genetically modified (GM) products. By mid 2007, QCTN will also operate an independent Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC). Working both of these committees in tandem will further assist sponsors to undertake clinical research in a timely and cost-efficient manner.

QCTN can help medical device, biotech and pharmaceutical organisations start preclinical and clinical work sooner by:

- arranging site visits to companies, hospitals, institutions and service providers;
- identifying (biotech) leads;
- liaising with regulators and other government bodies;
- matching sponsors' preclinical and/or clinical research requirements to Australian service providers' capabilities;
- providing access to independent IBC and/or HREC services; and
- arranging 'local' representation in Australia which is a legal requirement in order to start a trial in Australia.

Media Enquiries:

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Overview of Australia and Queensland

Australia has a population of about 21 million. Of Australia's numerous states, Queensland, located in the northeast comprises about 22.5% of Australia's landmass and is seven times the size of the United Kingdom.

$\frac{3}{4}$ of Queensland's four million residents are located in the southeast corner of the state and enjoy a subtropical climate whilst northern cities, such as Cairns and Townsville, enjoy a tropical climate. Australia's high standard of living is reflected by key economic indicators. These factors combine to make Queensland a very desirable place to live and conduct business.

The Queensland State Government has authority over many services including health, which is managed by Queensland Health. Clinical trials regulation, however, is managed at a national level by the Therapeutics Goods Administration (TGA) and the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC).

For more than a decade, the Queensland economy has been growing faster than the rest of Australia. Queensland's economic growth, highly skilled workforce, world-class infrastructure, low business taxes and easy lifestyle make it a perfect investment choice.

Starting a clinical trial in Australia

In Australia, clinical trials (in any phase) can be conducted under either the Clinical Trial Exemption (CTX) scheme or the Clinical Trial Notification (CTN) scheme. CTN is the preferred option with 99% of trials being conducted under this scheme. Under this scheme, a study can commence in seven to 14 days following ethics approval.

In an independent study by the Economist Intelligence Unit, commissioned by the Australian Government, Australia was benchmarked against USA, UK, Germany, Japan, Singapore and India and was found to be the 'number one site to conduct clinical trials'.

This high performance is driven by a number of key indicators such as:

- low average cost per patient;
- high availability of research sites;
- good participation and high on-time completion rates;
- quick clinical trial application review;
- a fast start as most trials are undertaken via the CTN process;

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- good clinical practice knowledge is very high;
- English language;
- good logistics infrastructure;
- a quality workforce; and
- significant potential for more clinical trials.

Together with the above factors, it is important to remember that Australia is a politically stable, safe, legal and regulatory robust country with high quality and experienced western medical expertise. Australia can be used as a 'stepping-stone' to US and European markets or could be considered for bridging trials for the Asian market due to the large population of immigrants with Asian background.

With ready access to comparator drugs, background therapy, standards of care, disease tracking programs for notifiable disease outbreaks and a flu monitoring network, Queensland is not only a smart option, but also a fun place to visit. For further information, please visit www.qctn.com.au/china

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