

Streamlining for Success:

How Henry Ford Health Achieved 50% Faster Start-up and Rapid Growth with WCG

OVERVIEW

Henry Ford Health (HFH), one of the United States' leading academic medical centers and health systems, engages in over 2,000 research projects annually.

Since the inception of the partnership between HFH and WCG, HFH acquired Ascension Michigan healthcare facilities, bringing its research operations total to nine hospitals and four outpatient facilities.



CHALLENGE

Operating in a decentralized clinical research model prior to partnering with WCG, HFH was burdened with long study start-up timelines and operational silos, resulting in administrative backlogs, unoptimized study start-up processes, and an impaired ability to build system-level relationships with sponsors.

HFH recognized the need to align departmental stakeholders and various administrative processes but faced significant hurdles as they worked to centralize and standardize pre-award functions.



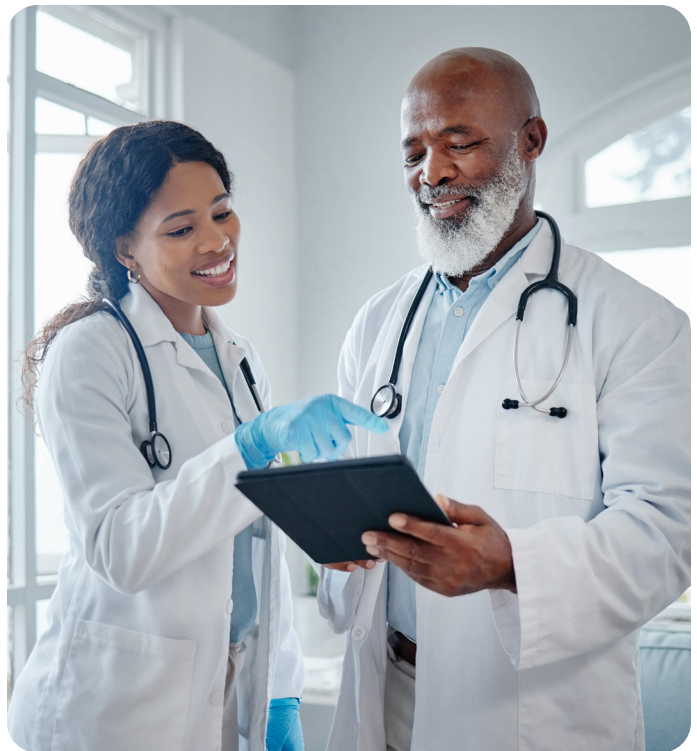
HFH was seeking a partner who could help them **centralize** and **grow** their portfolio of sponsored trials and Investigator-Initiated Trials (IITs) while ensuring **compliance**, **cost-effectiveness**, and **quality**.

As HFH moved to a more centralized model, they were particularly interested in optimizing operations through a scalable staffing model, gaining efficiency with protocol execution, and advancing clinical research.

Their primary goals were to transform and grow their clinical research infrastructure sustainably, gain a reliable and knowledgeable partner for IRB and IBC, and expedite their study activation timelines to align with the 90-day National Cancer Institute (NCI) benchmark for start-up.

WCG SOLUTIONS PROVIDED TO HENRY FORD HEALTH

- » **Institutional Review Board (IRB) Services**
- » **Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) Services**
- » **Study Start-Up (SSU) Services,** including:
 - Coverage Analysis
 - Budgets
 - Contracts



SOLUTIONS

In response to the needs of HFH, WCG provided a comprehensive suite of integrated solutions, including Institutional Review Board (IRB), Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC), and Study Start-Up (SSU) services, which encompassed coverage analysis, budgets, and contracts. In addition to the solutions provided, WCG partnered closely with HFH through quarterly governance meetings to ensure seamless integration and alignment with their goals.

WCG also supported HFH's transition to a centralized pre-award model by helping establish internal workflows and designing an organizational-level fee schedule for research activities. These initiatives not only met but exceeded HFH's operational goals and streamlined their research pre-award processes.

RESULTS

WCG's integrated and collaborative efforts with HFH's Clinical Trials Office, Research Administration teams, and senior executive leadership team successfully addressed their initial challenges through strategic departmental alignment and the establishment of a centralized process for study start-up. WCG's ongoing support and expert resources enabled 100% compliance for coverage analysis, optimization of clinical trial budgets, a 50% decrease in study start-up timelines, and expansion of the overall trial footprint, with the total number of open trial protocols increasing from 863 trials in 2022 to 1,246 trials in 2024 (a 44% increase).

REAL RESULTS OF HFH'S PARTNERSHIP WITH WCG

50%

decrease in study start-up timelines

44%

increase in open trial protocols

44%

decrease in coverage analysis
turnaround time

39%

decrease in contract negotiation time

29%

decrease in budget negotiation time

“Our partnership with WCG has allowed our staff to work at the **top of their license**, **streamline** our processes, and **build a culture** of research.”

Jennifer Gibson Levy, Vice President of
Education and Academic Services, HFH

Understanding HFH's desire for a 90-day activation time goal (targeted by NCI designated sites), WCG also worked closely with HFH and the HFH oncology team to support this aspiration. Within the HFH oncology program, they observed a 44% decrease in coverage analysis turnaround time, a 39% decrease in contract negotiation time, and a 29% decrease in budget negotiation time since partnering with WCG.

By partnering closely with individual departments and study teams within HFH, WCG tailored solutions to meet HFH's unique needs, resulting in more efficient workflows and the identification and elimination of bottlenecks. WCG's robust engagement not only laid a strong foundation for future expansion, especially with the acquisition of new Ascension Michigan sites, but also solidified a strong partnership characterized by continuous improvement.

According to Jennifer Gibson Levy, Vice President of Education and Academic Services at HFH, “Our partnership with WCG has allowed our staff to work at the top of their license, streamline our processes, and build a culture of research.”