

What Am I Missing Here?

Thought-Provoking Questions for the Clinical Research Industry

By Norman M. Goldfarb

223. Does remote monitoring actually work?

Documents can be inspected anywhere, provided they are the same documents (which might not be the case for "certified" copies of electronic medical records). Remote monitoring cannot substitute for the physical presence of a savvy monitor at the site, engaging with site personnel and seeing how the site actually operates. Most studies that employ remote monitoring therefore use a hybrid model that includes both in-person and remote "visits." Where is the published evidence that remote monitoring is an effective substitute for in-person monitoring? A comparison should not be hard to perform — simply create two monitoring arms for a study and then send out the auditors and compare their findings. What am I missing here?

Do you know a better way? Is something getting under your skin? Please send your ideas for future columns to ngoldfarb@firstclinical.com.

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