SCRMP
SOCIETY OF CLINICAL RESEARCH AND MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS

AN EXECUTIVE INDUSTRY PERSPECTIVE

THE FUTURE OF CLINICAL RESEARCH

Strengthening Pharma–CRO Partnerships, Advancing Patient Safety and Building a Digitally Enabled Research Ecosystem

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FOREWORD

Clinical research is undergoing a significant transformation. Digital innovation, evolving regulatory expectations, a stronger focus on patient safety and the growing importance of real-world evidence are redefining the pharmaceutical and clinical research landscape.

India has an important opportunity to strengthen its position in global clinical research. Realising this opportunity requires more than operational capacity: it calls for strategic collaboration between pharmaceutical companies, CROs, academic institutions, technology providers and industry professionals.

Through its 2026 SCRMP Nexus editions across Chandigarh, London, Hyderabad and Bengaluru, SCRMP has created platforms for industry engagement, knowledge exchange and professional collaboration. This inaugural white paper presents key industry priorities and strategic perspectives for a stronger, more connected and future-ready clinical research ecosystem.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The next phase of clinical research will be shaped by five interconnected developments:

NO.	INDUSTRY PRIORITY	WHAT IT MEANS
01	**Strategic Pharma–CRO partnerships**	Moving beyond transactional outsourcing towards long-term, performance-driven collaboration.
02	**Patient safety and pharmacovigilance**	Strengthening drug-safety systems through scientific expertise, quality and data intelligence.
03	**AI and digital transformation**	Improving efficiency and decision support through responsible technology adoption.
04	**Real-world evidence and HEOR**	Generating stronger evidence to inform healthcare and development decisions.
05	**Talent and regulatory excellence**	Building skilled professionals and maintaining robust quality and compliance standards.

THE CENTRAL OPPORTUNITY: India can move beyond cost-based service delivery and strengthen its position as a trusted global partner in clinical development, scientific research and evidence generation.

01 | INDIA'S OPPORTUNITY IN GLOBAL CLINICAL RESEARCH

India's pharmaceutical capabilities, scientific workforce, healthcare institutions and growing CRO ecosystem provide a strong foundation for global clinical research. Future competitiveness, however, will depend on the ability to deliver consistent quality, regulatory confidence, patient-centric research and reliable data.

The opportunity is to position India not merely as a cost-efficient outsourcing destination, but as a strategic partner for clinical development and evidence generation.

- Strengthen clinical operations and scientific capabilities.
- Maintain regulatory compliance, data integrity and patient protection.

- Develop technology-enabled research processes and experienced talent.
- Expand international partnerships and operational excellence.

02 | PHARMA–CRO PARTNERSHIPS: THE NEXT GROWTH DRIVER

The sponsor–CRO relationship is evolving. Pharmaceutical companies increasingly need partners that contribute scientific expertise, operational reliability, technology capabilities and strategic value. Sustainable partnerships require shared accountability rather than a narrow focus on contracted deliverables.

What pharmaceutical sponsors expect

- Quality-driven execution, regulatory compliance and therapeutic expertise.
- Transparent communication, reliable delivery and proactive risk management.
- Strong project governance, experienced teams and technology-enabled operations.

What CROs need from sponsors

- Clear expectations, timely decisions and effective governance.
- Realistic budgets and timelines, access to relevant information.
- Open communication and long-term collaboration opportunities.

SCRMP PERSPECTIVE: The next generation of Pharma–CRO partnerships should be built around trust, measurable performance, shared responsibility and long-term value creation.

03 | PHARMACOVIGILANCE: PATIENT SAFETY AS A STRATEGIC PRIORITY

Pharmacovigilance is more than a regulatory requirement; it is a critical part of pharmaceutical product development and lifecycle management. The industry is moving towards integrated, technology-enabled safety systems.

- Adverse event management, medical assessment and accurate safety reporting.
- Signal detection, risk evaluation and benefit-risk assessment.
- Safety database management, quality systems and audit readiness.
- Post-marketing surveillance and global regulatory compliance.
- Responsible use of automation for case processing, literature screening and workflow support.

INDUSTRY PRIORITY: Combine scientific expertise, technology and strong quality systems to generate timely, reliable safety insights while maintaining human oversight and accountability.

04 | AI AND DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION: FROM OPPORTUNITY TO IMPLEMENTATION

Artificial intelligence, automation and advanced analytics are creating opportunities across clinical research. Their value will depend on fit-for-purpose implementation, validated performance, data protection and appropriate human oversight.

FUNCTION	EMERGING OPPORTUNITY
Clinical operations	Workflow automation and operational analytics
Pharmacovigilance	Case-processing support and safety intelligence
Clinical data management	Data review and anomaly identification

FUNCTION	EMERGING OPPORTUNITY
Regulatory and medical writing	Document management and quality support
RWE and HEOR	Evidence analysis and research support

INDUSTRY PRIORITY: Adopt AI responsibly, with clear governance, human oversight, data protection and measurable business outcomes.

05 | REAL-WORLD EVIDENCE, HEOR AND SCIENTIFIC EXCELLENCE

Clinical trials remain essential to establishing the safety and efficacy of medicines. Real-world data and Health Economics and Outcomes Research can provide additional insights into treatment patterns, outcomes, healthcare utilisation and value in routine practice.

- Real-world data strategy and observational research.
- Comparative effectiveness and outcomes research.
- Health technology assessment and evidence synthesis.
- Scientific publications and healthcare resource utilisation analysis.

INDUSTRY PRIORITY: Invest in high-quality data, robust methodologies and collaboration between sponsors, CROs, academic institutions and analytics organisations.

06 | REGULATORY EXCELLENCE AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Quality, ethics, data integrity and patient protection are the foundation of credible clinical research. Organisations must maintain strong GCP practices, risk-based quality management, investigator oversight, documentation and inspection readiness.

The industry also needs professionals with multidisciplinary capabilities across clinical operations, pharmacovigilance, regulatory affairs, medical writing, clinical data management, biostatistics, RWE and digital technologies.

- Strengthen academic–industry collaboration and practical training.
- Promote continuous professional development and leadership capability.
- Build a culture of quality, compliance and patient-centric research.

07 | SCRMP NEXUS 2026: CONNECTING INDUSTRY LEADERS

In 2026, SCRMP's Nexus programme connected professional communities through four editions in India and the United Kingdom. The published programmes addressed complementary dimensions of clinical research, drug safety, innovation and industry collaboration.

EDITION	DATE & VENUE	INDUSTRY FOCUS
Chandigarh	7 February 2026 Radisson RED, Mohali	Bridging academia and industry; professional engagement in clinical research. [1]
London	25 June 2026 London Heathrow Marriott Hotel	Clinical research, drug safety, digital innovation and real-world evidence. [2]

EDITION	DATE & VENUE	INDUSTRY FOCUS
Hyderabad	8 August 2026 Novotel Hyderabad Airport	Drug safety, pharmacovigilance, innovation and evidence generation. [3]
Bengaluru	21 November 2026 Sterling Mac Hotel	Future-ready research through evidence, patient safety, regulation and innovation. [4]

Event themes and programme information are based on the official SCRMP event pages. Speaker affiliations, where published, should not be interpreted as institutional endorsement.

08 | INDUSTRY PRIORITIES FOR 2027–2030

SCRMP identifies seven priorities for the next phase of clinical research:

- **Build stronger Pharma–CRO partnerships:** Encourage transparent, long-term and performance-driven relationships.
- **Strengthen patient safety:** Invest in pharmacovigilance, safety intelligence and quality systems.
- **Accelerate responsible digital adoption:** Apply AI, automation and analytics without compromising compliance.
- **Expand evidence-generation capabilities:** Strengthen RWE, HEOR and scientific research.
- **Improve regulatory readiness:** Promote global standards, risk-based oversight and continuous improvement.
- **Develop industry-ready talent:** Connect academic learning with practical industry requirements.
- **Expand international collaboration:** Encourage knowledge exchange and cross-border partnerships.

09 | SCRMP'S COMMITMENT

The future of clinical research requires collaboration rather than isolated efforts. SCRMP aims to contribute by connecting pharmaceutical companies, CROs, academic institutions, clinical research professionals and technology stakeholders.

- Industry leadership conferences and professional forums.
- Pharmaceutical and CRO networking opportunities.
- Academic–industry collaborations.
- Knowledge-sharing and thought-leadership initiatives.
- Professional development and international industry engagement.

CONCLUSION

The future of clinical research will not be determined by technology or operational capacity alone. It will depend on the industry's ability to combine scientific excellence, patient safety, regulatory confidence, skilled professionals and strategic collaboration.

India has the opportunity to become a stronger global partner in clinical development and evidence generation. Achieving this vision requires pharmaceutical companies, CROs, academic institutions, technology providers and professionals to work towards shared objectives.

THE NEXT PHASE OF CLINICAL RESEARCH MUST BE BUILT ON COLLABORATION, INNOVATION, QUALITY AND TRUST.

ABOUT SCRMP

The Society of Clinical Research and Medical Professionals (SCRMP) is a professional organisation focused on connecting clinical research and medical professionals with pharmaceutical companies, CROs, academic institutions and industry stakeholders. SCRMP works to strengthen professional engagement, industry collaboration, knowledge exchange and academic partnerships across the clinical research ecosystem.

Website: https://scrmp.in

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DISCLAIMER

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