

Collaboration Redefined

Parexel's Site Alliance Partnership and Accountability

Through its Site Alliance evolution, Parexel demonstrates how a CRO can redefine accountability, foster transparency, and elevate site relationships. By adapting to sites' changing needs, creating clear points of contact, and investing in emerging sites through curated efforts and mentoring programs, Parexel continues to advance a collaborative culture where sites feel heard, supported, and empowered to succeed.

A Decade of Partnership and Progress

Over ten years ago, Parexel established its Global Site Alliances Department to strengthen partnerships with clinical research sites worldwide. From the start, the initiative aimed to foster a consistent, trusted experience for sites while ensuring that sponsors and patients benefit from more efficient and transparent clinical trial delivery.

In 2023, **Parexel noticed a shift in how sites communicate across the industry. It was time to make a pivotal change to the Site Alliance Program. Parexel shifted from a geographically-based model to a therapeutically-aligned structure.** The goal was to deepen focus, improve flexibility, and enhance accountability to both sites and sponsors. Rather than grouping sites by region, Parexel realigned them by therapeutic area, creating more meaningful relationships built on shared expertise and operational context.

This change marked more than an organizational adjustment; it represented a renewed commitment to accountability and collaboration. Parexel wanted to ensure that sites always knew who to reach, who understood their challenges, and who could advocate for them internally. This shift created a stronger sense of alignment and accessibility between Parexel and its site partners.

Even beyond the alliance itself, Parexel maintains long-term, patient-centered partnerships. If a site transitions out of the Alliance, Parexel continues to collaborate on projects where appropriate, ensuring continuity and mutual respect. The underlying principle is simple: *partnership doesn't end with a contract—it grows through trust.*

The results speak for themselves.

Accountability as a Core Value

Parexel's approach places **accountability at the center** of its operating model. This extends to sites, sponsors, and patients. The company's robust standard operating procedures (SOPs) and operational frameworks are designed not only to meet compliance standards but to create transparency across every interaction.

Accountability means being there for partners when things go right and when they don't. It's about listening to feedback, acting on it, and ensuring sites feel seen and supported.

The results speak for themselves. Sites now proactively reach out to Parexel's alliance managers for guidance, confident that their concerns will be heard and addressed. The trust that has emerged from this responsiveness has transformed Parexel's role from a service provider to a true partner.

Across the Alliance program, **global relationship managers** serve as single points of contact. They maintain regular check-ins, provide real-time updates, and escalate issues swiftly. For sites, this eliminates one of the most common frustrations in the industry—*not knowing who to call when something goes wrong*. If a concern arises, Parexel's "go to the source" philosophy ensures quick clarity and consistent follow-up.

Structure and Clarity

The Parexel Site Alliance program currently includes **approximately 350 parent sites** across the globe, supported by therapeutically-aligned relationship managers. For large, multi-therapeutic networks, a distinct engagement model ensures flexibility across indications. These managers work across multiple therapeutic areas to mirror the complexity of the partnerships they support.

This design reflects Parexel's understanding that one-size-fits-all models don't serve modern research ecosystems. Whether it's a single-site oncology practice or a multi-country site network handling diverse trials, Parexel adapts its approach to the partner's operational reality.

This structural clarity reinforces what sites value most: **reliability, accessibility, and responsiveness**. Sites know exactly who their Parexel counterpart is, how to reach them, and what to expect when challenges arise.

Listening, Learning, and Acting

True collaboration thrives on feedback, and Parexel has built strong feedback mechanisms that close the loop between listening and acting.

- **Live video conferences** are used for routine site alliance meetings, as well as in delicate or high-stakes conversations to maintain authenticity and personal connection.

- The **Site Advisory Panel**, composed of principal investigators, coordinators, and recruitment staff, provides real-world insights on timely topics that impact site operations.
- **Site Pulse Forums**, held quarterly, gather global representatives to share their perspectives on process improvements, technology use, and patient engagement.

These forums not only surface challenges but also inspire innovation. Insights from Site Pulse discussions have influenced internal training programs, technology rollouts, and the development of clearer site-facing materials.

Each new alliance relationship begins with a **General Business Agreement (GBA)** that establishes measurable parameters. For larger or complex sites, Parexel tailors these agreements to ensure balance and mutual benefit.

To ensure mutual understanding, **report cards and aligned KPIs** then define success metrics between Parexel and sites. This data-driven approach clarifies expectations, strengthens accountability, and enables both sides to measure progress transparently.

Proactive Partnership in Practice

Parexel's relationship managers don't just manage issues, they anticipate them. Embedded directly into project teams, these managers act as **liaisons between sites and operational functions**. By spotting early signals such as slower enrollment rates or potential protocol complexities, they can work with internal teams to mitigate risk and communicate adjustments promptly to sites.

Regular internal reviews help detect emerging trends and guide timely responses. When challenges are identified, Parexel's goal is to bring them to the site before they become problems. That proactive communication strengthens trust and reinforces the company's reputation for reliability and transparency.

This model helps Parexel protect one of the most critical resources in research—time—and demonstrates how consistency and openness can accelerate progress for everyone involved.

Investing in the Future: Emerging Sites and Mentorship

As the research landscape evolves, Parexel is ensuring that the next generation of clinical sites is prepared to thrive. Two cornerstone programs demonstrate the company's commitment to developing sustainable site ecosystems: the **Emerging Sites Program** and the **Site Mentorship Initiative**.



The Emerging Sites Program targets organizations with fewer than five years of clinical research experience. Through an application and interview process, these sites participate in capability calls where they present their operations to Parexel's feasibility and alliance teams. The program offers clarity on CRO expectations and practical insight into industry standards. For many, it serves as a gateway to future commercial trials.

Complementing this is the Site Mentorship Program, which pairs emerging sites with experienced site leaders and Parexel alliance managers. Quarterly check-ins encourage knowledge exchange on everything from managing multiple CRO relationships to operational best practices.

The mentorship experience has proven invaluable. Feedback from both mentors and mentees underscores the value of connection, guidance, and shared learning. The program's success led to its doubling in size within a year, reflecting both demand and enthusiasm from participants.

Mentorship bridges the experience gap. When new sites learn directly from established peers, it accelerates their growth and strengthens the entire ecosystem.

Collaboration, Accountability, and Shared Success

Parexel's Site Alliance continues to exemplify what collaboration can achieve when it's intentional, structured, and responsive. The company's evolution from regional management to therapeutic alignment is more than operational. It's cultural.

By creating clear lines of communication, investing in emerging talent, and embedding accountability at every level, Parexel has turned partnership into a daily practice. Its initiatives show that collaboration is not a one-time achievement but an ongoing commitment to mutual respect and shared goals.

When sites succeed, patients succeed. Parexel's ongoing mission is to ensure that partnership is built on trust, transparency, and a shared purpose. That's what collaboration means to Parexel.

Collaborate Forward Takeaways

- **Evolve with your partners.** Parexel's shift to a therapeutic alignment model reflects a willingness to adapt to how sites communicate and collaborate today.

- **Accountability builds trust.** Clear processes, consistent points of contact, and open feedback loops strengthen partnerships and foster reliability.
- **Listen, then act.** Regular site forums, advisory panels, and feedback mechanisms only matter when they lead to visible changes.
- **Invest in the next generation.** Emerging and mentorship programs create stronger, more confident research sites—and a more sustainable ecosystem for all.
- **Partnership is continuous.** True collaboration isn't a milestone; it's a mindset that requires ongoing transparency and shared purpose.

Collaborate Forward celebrates organizations like Parexel that champion the spirit of collaboration across clinical research. By fostering openness, accountability, and connection, Parexel not only strengthens its partnerships but also advances the broader mission we all share—improving clinical research for patients everywhere.

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