Introduction to a Site File

An Investigator Site File (ISF) is a collection of documentation that allows the conduct, management, integrity, recreation and compliance of the trial to be evaluated. Therefore, the documentation contained within it should be sufficient to adequately reconstruct all trial activities undertaken, along with key decisions made concerning the trial.

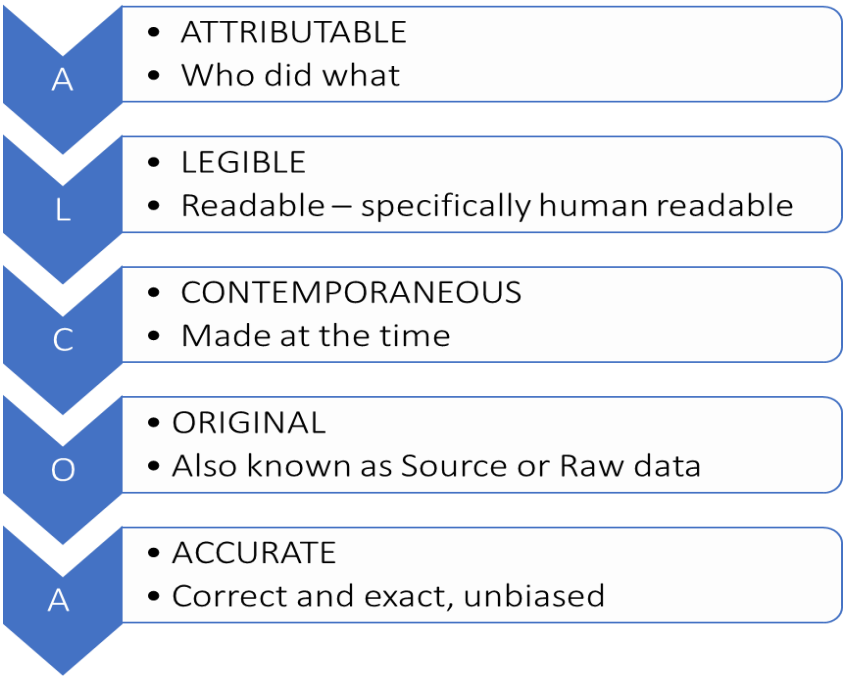
Essential documentation is described in section 8 of The International Council for Harmonisation of Technical Requirements for Pharmaceuticals for Human Use (ICH) Good Clinical Practice E6(R2)

The contents of an ISF will vary depending upon the type and needs of the trial, for instance within a Clinical Trial of an Investigational Medical Product (CTIMP) the ISF will contain sections regarding the IMP that would not be applicable to other studies e.g. questionnaire studies.

Appendix 1 contains a suggested contents list for an ISF, a link to a downloadable word version can be found below.

It is the responsibility of the Principal Investigator (PI) or their delegate (e.g. Research Nurse, Trial Coordinator or Data Manager) to ensure that all essential documents have been collated prior to study initiation and that the ISF is maintained throughout.. Documentation should be filed in a timely manner.

ALCOA principles should be followed:



Additional Information:

- An ISF can be paper based, which may require numerous volumes.
- Documents should be version controlled
- Superseded documentation should be marked as such
- Ancillary files (if required) should be cross referenced with the ISF, in particular, with location and content
- If documentation is stored on shared drives a risk assessment must be completed
- A mix of paper and electronic files must be appropriately cross-referenced
- Good Clinical Practice (GCP) training should be updated every three (3) years and a certificate retained for the tenure of the staff member on the study
- CVs should be updated every three (3) years or after a substantial change, for example: to job role or recent training
- Confirmation of General Medical Council (GMC) registration should be added to the ISF as applicable

Useful Links

NIHR Suggested Investigator Site File Contents
GUIDELINE FOR GOOD CLINICAL PRACTICE (ich.org)

Appendix 1. NIHR Suggested Investigator Site File Contents template

SECTION	TITLE	CONTENT/COMMENTS	SIGN & DATE WHEN COMPLETE
1	Protocol / amendments	Current protocol Protocol amendments i.e REC/HRA/MHRA/R&D Historical protocols	
2	Sample CRF/ QLQ Diary Cards	If too bulky to put in file place file note in this section stating where it can be found	
3	Regulatory approval documentation		
4	Site signature /responsibility log		
5	Curriculum Vitae	CVs for all research personnel listed in the signature/responsibility log	
6	Patient Identification form Patient recruitment /screening form		
7	Sample of current and all historical Patient Information / Informed Consent form and GP Letter Completed patient Information and Informed Consent Forms		
8	Correspondence	File in reverse chronological order all correspondence to/from the coordinating research body. File email communication Include a separate section here for newsletters Superseded documents to be clearly identified and segregated from current copies	
9	Minutes from Initiation meeting	If the study is not monitored state this in a file note in this section	

	Monitoring logs Notes of telephone calls	Document telephone call in relation to agreements or significant discussions regarding trial administration, trial conduct, adverse events or protocol violations	
10	Blank serious adverse event forms and guidelines for their completion		
11	Notification of serious adverse events and/or safety reports	By Investigator to co-ordinating research body By co-ordinating research body to Investigator By co-ordinating research body to regulatory authorities (if this will not be supplied place a file note stating this)	
12	Randomisation details	Instructions (if applicable)	
13	Instructions for handling trial medication and trial related materials Shipping records	This responsibility is normally that of the clinical trial pharmacist if this is the case place a file note in this section stating this	
14	Clinical Laboratory	Laboratory normal reference ranges (including revisions) Laboratory certificate(s)	
15	Contracts	Investigator Commitment Statement/Study Acknowledgement Indemnity Confidentiality Clinical Trial Agreement including financial details. Completed and signed FDA 1572 form (if applicable) Financial disclosure letter (if applicable)	
16	Investigator's Brochure Safety alert letters/Updates		
17	Completed Data Queries		
18	Study Training Materials		

19	Miscellaneous (specify)…….		

AFTER THE COMPLETION OF THE TRIAL THE FOLLOWING MUST BE ALSO FILED IN THE SITE FILE

20	Investigational product(s) accountability at site	This will be with the clinical trials pharmacist	
21	Documentation of Investigational product destruction	If destroyed at site this will be with the clinical trials pharmacist	
22	Final report	From Investigator to REC	
23	Clinical study report	To document results and interpretation of trial	