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Accel Research Sites to add jobs as Covid treatment studies ramp up

For Accel Research Sites, Covid-19 has provided an opportunity to do business while combating the virus.

Since enrolling its first patient in a Covid-19 vaccine trial, the company — part of Lake Mary-based Accel Clinical Services — has started 28 Covid-related trials with more than 3,500 patients. Its latest efforts include three pediatric vaccine trials, as well as trials tied to potential treatments for the virus.

The company currently has 20 open positions at its Orlando locations and will continue to grow as the need for trials continues, [Lora Parahovnik](#), CEO of Accel Research Sites, told *Orlando Business Journal*. [Accel Clinical Services in March had](#) 196 employees, including 152 locally.



Here, Parahovnik spoke with OBJ on how clinical trials have changed during the pandemic, new challenges, what will shape demand and more:

How have clinical trials changed in the latest phase of the pandemic? We are seeing a shift in trials more focused on alternative treatments to battle the newest variants of the virus. This is an ongoing discovery to find many treatment options that potentially will cover all unique patient situations. Having many approved treatments in addition to different type of vaccines give us, as a global community, the best chance of success for battling a virus that is as adaptable as this one.

What have been the latest challenges in conducting trials compared to earlier in the pandemic? We have the unique experience of studying vaccines, treatments and diagnostic methods for Covid-19 that simultaneously are receiving FDA approval for emergency use and full FDA approval for public consumption. This creates barriers to clinical trial participation since there are approved vaccines and treatments. Highlighting the benefits of trial participation is crucial to continuing research and potentially getting new vaccines, treatments and testing methods approved. Our patients can benefit

from getting a new treatment for a disease before it is available to everyone, playing a more active role in their own health care and getting more frequent health check-ups as part of the treatment protocol.

What has demand been like for clinical trials here? The demand has been extremely high since the global clinical trials market is expected to grow at a compound annual growth rate of 5.7% from 2021 to 2028. Nonetheless, factors such as globalization of clinical trials, rapid technological advancement and increasing need for contract research organizations/pharma to conduct research operations appear to bode well for the market. The rising demand for clinical trials in emerging countries and increasing prevalence of chronic disease are driving this industry forward. A growing number of biologics, the necessity for tailored medications and orphan treatments, and the unmet need for innovative technologies all are driving the industry.

What are your firm's goals through the end of the year? We plan to expand our managed services platforms to the smaller research sites, to expand geographically and penetrate to the global market.

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