



Icon Group Leads Advancements in Australia with Global Quality Certification Secured Across Both Sites and Workforce

GCSA and Workforce Process Quality Certification Achieved in Parallel Demonstrating Commitment to the Highest Global Best-Practice Research Standards

Brisbane, Australia and Maidenhead, United Kingdom, 3 October 2024 – The GCSA, Global Quality Standard for Clinical Research Sites, and silver level Workforce Process Quality Certification (WPQC) have been awarded by IAOCR to Icon Group (Icon), Australia’s largest dedicated provider of comprehensive cancer care who operate the largest private cancer clinical trials program in Australia. Today’s announcement follows a rigorous evidence-based assessment process resulting in Icon becoming the first organization in Australia to achieve these industry-leading benchmark standards.

These two certifications were awarded following a comprehensive review and assessment of Icon’s research site business operational processes (for GCSA) and workforce processes (for WPQC). Icon presented a solid and effective organization that was highly communicative during the certification journey, reflecting strong business partnership qualities and demonstrating genuine support for, and commitment to evaluation and improvement to their clinical trials program. Throughout the process it was noted that Icon shows strong evidence of exceptional quality research practices and procedures, especially in the area of health and wellbeing, demonstrating how they are raising standards for the industry, not just in Australia but internationally.

“I’m extremely proud to be the first Australian clinical trials team to be awarded this internationally recognized clinical research site certification. It’s a testament to Icon’s dedication to upholding patient safety and the delivery of a high quality comprehensive clinical trials program,” explains Sophie Mepham PhD, Icon Group Executive Manager for Research. “Research is part of Icon’s DNA; and our proven robust governance, processes and systems allow us to bring clinical trials to more places globally, while ensuring we maintain the highest standards of international quality across a broad geographical footprint. Thank you to the IAOCR team for their unwavering commitment to global research standards and to my research team for their hard work and dedication in achieving this status.”

The GCSA certification journey involved a review and assessment of research business operational procedures and discussions with research staff to gain a full understanding of business practices that underpin the safe, effective delivery of clinical trials and the quality of both patient and sponsor/CRO journeys. The WPQC further delved specifically into the quality of clinical research workforce processes and frameworks to ensure a high performing, engaged, committed and competent team which is crucial for reducing risk and delivering high quality clinical research.

“Icon achieved these certifications due to their impressive work and impressive leadership” explains Sarah Everitt, VP Operations, IAOCR and GCSA. “The team was responsive, enthusiastic and there were clear roles and responsibilities within the organization that made the certification process streamlined and efficient and made Icon a pleasure to assess. It was clear that the leadership team has invested a significant amount of time in developing a specific Icon Group identity and culture. This approach is paying dividends in the organization.”

Independent global industry experts and opinion leaders supported and ratified the comprehensive assessment frameworks used by IAOCR and GCSA. The GCSA Quality Standard for Clinical Research Sites was developed with the support of a Global Advisory board of key



stakeholders and leaders from across the industry including Pharma/Biotech, CROs, Government Bodies and Commercial and NHS Sites. The GCSA Quality standard reviews the following seven core business operational areas identified by Sponsors and CROs as being critical to the delivery of high-quality clinical trials: Governance; Site Business Strategy; Workforce Quality; Patient Engagement; Feasibility; Study Start-up & Initiation; and Study Management, Operations & Close Down. Complimenting the GCSA Certification, the WPQC provides a clear benchmark of the highest workforce process standards for both those working within the organization to pride themselves on, as well as for sponsor's and CROs looking for a 'trusted global clinical research partner' with demonstrable evidence of quality workforce standards.

Whilst clinical research is a highly regulated industry, until now there have been no established standards by which sites can demonstrate that they are able to meet the expectations of sponsors, CROs and patients, and no way for sponsors or CROs to select clinical research sites based on clear quality standards which have been independently assessed at the organizational level. GCSA sets this much-needed industry standard for research sites to strive for and achieve; it allows sites to evidence and communicate their capabilities and differentiate in a crowded and increasingly competitive marketplace. Beyond the assessment and certification process, where required, GCSA will deliver individual, practical support on the areas for development to meet the standards and will work collaboratively with sites to achieve certification.

To learn more about IAOCR and GCSA how we can support your business please visit iaocr.com and or email info@iaocr.com. Alternatively, you can call:

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Notes to editors

About Icon Group

Icon Group is Australia's largest integrated provider of cancer care with a growing reach in New Zealand, Asia and the United Kingdom.

Icon is built on a strong but simple mission - to deliver the best care possible to as many people as possible, as close to home as possible. The group brings together all aspects of quality cancer care including medical oncology, haematology, radiation oncology, Theranostics, research, pharmacy and compounding to deliver a truly integrated, end-to-end seamless service for cancer patients. With a network of more than 300 doctors, over 50 cancer centres, five compounding facilities and the management of 70 plus pharmacies, Icon is delivering world-leading care and helping address the global cancer burden.

For more information visit www.icongroup.global and follow Icon Group on LinkedIn at <https://www.linkedin.com/company/icon-group>

For more information on research at Icon visit: <https://icongroup.global/en/our-services/research/>



About IAOCR

IAOCR is The International Accrediting Organization for Clinical Research. We are the only organization in the world to Qualify Clinical Research Professionals to international standards. Through robustly accrediting competence, IAOCR reduces risk to patients, clinical research and professional reputations - whilst improving compliance and bringing valuable new treatments to market more quickly and safely.

IAOCR competency verification and assessment processes and accreditations have been built specifically for the clinical research industry in collaboration with industry experts globally. They provide a quality standards and visible professional certification marks to organizations committed to globally consistent, high quality clinical trials workforces.

We believe that clinical trial patients anywhere in the world deserve the best protection in terms of rights and wellbeing. Therefore, in addition to providing accreditation, training and consultancy services, IAOCR works with industry leaders and regulators around the globe to develop best practice guidelines. To find out more visit: iaocr.com

About Workforce Process Quality Certification (WPQC)

The Clinical Research Workforce Process Quality Certification (WPQC, previously WQA) was developed in collaboration with industry experts in response to demand from CROs and pharmaceutical companies. Awarded at the organizational level, IAOCR Workforce Process Quality Certification delivers:

- A systemized approach to achieving employer goals through increased workforce performance & engagement.
- Differentiation for service providers.
- Transparency for clients.
- Independent verification of embedded workforce competence and engagement of best practices.
- Reassurance of workforce quality globally.
- Improved employee attraction, engagement and retention through an enhanced employer brand experience.
- Improved workforce effectiveness and efficiency leading to reduced costs and reduced risks.
- Embedding of a 'right first time' and 'quality built in' approach through workforce best practice processes.
- Expediting new treatments to market.
- A distinctive and clearly recognizable quality mark.

About GCSA

GCSA is a global quality standard for clinical trial sites set across seven key areas. It ensures clinical trial sites are working to robust and effective processes so that they can deliver best-in-class services to patients and sponsors/CROs. The GCSA framework was developed over 4 years with industry research and engagement. It has been ratified by a Global Advisory Board of leading industry representatives from the not-for-profit and commercial sector, including leading global Sponsors and CROs, the NHS and other leading healthcare organizations.

The standard has been built to address key industry challenges and facilitate synergistic working between sites and sponsors to enable better patient outcomes. It provides potential sponsors with an assurance of capability through passing independent assessment based on standards and expectations specified by sponsors. Furthermore, GCSA aims to increase clinical research through alignment with commercial requirements. To find out more visit: iaocr.com



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