



Kimberly Lillestol Peterson, Director of Operations, Lillestol Research, Fargo, ND

therapy services and vaccine research for global applications, with Chambers referring to growing collaborations with area colleges and universities.

So, while Fargo continues to nurture CSM (Clinical Supplies Management, with President Jerry Finken) and Aldevron – both

having planted deep roots in their fields of endeavor – in Bismarck another firm is tracking on a fast growth track by conducting Phase II and III research.

Other research companies in the region are also contributing to the growing reputation of the region as a biomedical research center. In Fargo, CSM and Aldevron have planted firm roots in their fields of endeavor; in Bismarck, another firm is tracking on a fast growth curve by conducting Phase II and III research.

Odyssey Research was founded in 1999 by five people and has since gone on to become a significant player in the clinical trial arena, with 80 employees scattered around the world (including Latin America, China, and India) and many contracts with physicians in seven states, including both Dakotas.

“We directly employ these coordinators who go out and work with the principal investigators (doctors) and we handle all the marketing, paperwork, and details,” offers Suzanne Wentz, president of the far-flung operations. “The firm was first known for osteoporosis studies, but we’ve expanded into other areas, working with Clinical Research Organizations (CROs) in areas like oncology, neuroscience, rheumatology, gout, lupus, and women’s studies. As the studies get more and more complex, our role continues to grow with physicians who want to do the research, but don’t want to deal with the demands that we

can address so they can practice medicine.”

One of the doctors who used to work with Odyssey in Fargo was Mike Lillestol, an internal medicine specialist who founded Internal Medicine Associates and also, in 2004, Lillestol Research, LLC.

“We are working with eight study coordinators and have 18 studies going now,” says Kimberly Lillestol Peterson, director of operations and daughter of Dr. Lillestol. “Some of the companies we are working with are large pharmaceutical firms. Our current research deals with diabetes, asthma, pink eye, and osteoporosis. For the patients, they get a chance to receive extra care and drugs that have passed the first couple phases of FDA approval. Our work is with Phase III and IV products.”

Similar to Odyssey and PRACS, the new Lillestol firm is finding success partially because the pool of patients in the region is highly desirable to pharmaceutical firms.

“Patients are compliant and they follow directions here,” reports Peterson. “The major firms love us for that reason alone, along with our growing reputation as a reliable and accurate research firm.”

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