

ConturELN makes life easier for Biovitrum Biopharmaceuticals

For the contract development and manufacturing organization Biovitrum Biopharmaceuticals time is money. They operate under high profitability demands but experienced inefficiency in the way they worked. Thanks to ConturELN they have improved their productivity significantly, with an annual time saving of approximately 3 weeks per scientists and year.

Biovitrum is one of the largest biotech companies in Europe with operations in Sweden and in the UK. The Biopharmaceuticals department develops and produces protein and antibody drugs on a contractual basis.

– Our customers put high demands on reporting, access to lab journals and results, as well as inspections, so it is at all times necessary for us to have easy access to all the generated data and to have a high-quality system where all this is possible, says Dr. Ludvig Moberg, Project Manager ConturELN Implementation at Biopharmaceuticals.

Before introducing ConturELN the only existing IT-system was data storage for analytical chromatography systems, available through the software systems in the different lab instruments. All experiments were documented in traditional paper lab notebooks, which was the real bottleneck.

Dr. Moberg realized that the department worked inefficiently and during the fall 2003 he started an investigation drafting the need for some sort of data base.

– It was not clear from the start what our organization needed as no one had really asked the question. So, it was important to try to change people's mindset, to show the gains of having such a system and pointing out the inefficiency in the way they worked compared to how they could work with an ELN system. That was the difficult part.

Discussions started with Contur and in January 2005 the group began a ConturELN pilot project involving nine users. The response from the users was very positive and only three months after the introduction the ConturELN system was rolled out to the entire department.

– From a user perspective the software is intuitive, straight-forward and requires minimum training. The cultural resistance has been less than expected. The only real comment has actually been “why haven't we done this before?” says Moberg.

The implementation of electronic lab notebooks at Biovitrum Biopharmaceuticals has been a great success. Not only

has it brought significant improvements such as increased quality and orderliness. It has also and perhaps most importantly, shown that there are major gains in productivity and project throughput. As Biopharmaceuticals is a contract development and manufacturing organization (CDMO) they operate under high profitability demands, so it was important to be able to show the management that the system actually is extremely beneficial.

– The time savings analysis that was completed after the pilot study indicated an annual time saving of approximately 3 weeks per scientists and year. When we multiplied our 100 scientists x 3 weeks, we got a total of 300 weeks per year. This was well enough to convince our management to replace the paper notebooks with an electronic system, says Dr. Moberg.

Dr. Moberg believes that one of the reasons why ConturELN has been so successful and well-received by the users is the fact that it is such a powerful yet easy-to-use tool for documenting experiments and sharing information.

One of the most appreciated features is templates, used to facilitate and speed up documentation during repetitive experiment tasks. At first the users started making simple, private templates but during the deployment the templates have gradually been evolved to include public as well as more complex templates, still generic enough to be applicable on different kind of experiments.

Also, ConturELN facilitates counter-signing and reviewing of experiments which makes it easy for the responsible person to read, review and counter-sign.

– ConturELN is a one-stop-shop. The users don't have to worry about where to put their spectra, chromatograms, pictures and graphs. Furthermore, Excel files and similar formats are easily hosted in ConturELN. Through ConturELN you have access to all the other systems and ConturELN is the spider in the web that ties all together, says Dr. Moberg.