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“In the coming 5 years from now, no Indian CROs will grow or survive without the use of AI”

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In January 2026, Ahmedabad-based Veeda Lifesciences announced a strategic leadership transition that marks a new chapter in the company's evolution. Binoy Gardi, the company’s founder and visionary leader, has returned to lead Veeda Lifesciences as the Group Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Managing Director. Gardi brings decades of industry experience and the entrepreneurial spirit that originally built Veeda into a trusted global contract research organisation (CRO). In a detailed conversation, Binoy Gardi, Group CEO and Managing Director, Veeda Lifesciences spoke to BioSpectrum India about the company’s future plans.

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What are the major plans in store at Veeda for 2026? How do you plan to strengthen the company's position in the CRO sector in India, and globally?

For 2026, my priority is positioning Veeda as a tech-enabled CRO with artificial intelligence (AI) integrated across the entire development continuum, from protocol design to real-world evidence generation. Leveraging our platform of four strategic business units (SBUs) across 9 countries and 26 geographies, we aim to help clients run smarter, faster, more reliable studies that de-risk drug development.

Central to this is our investment in Mango Sciences, a Boston-based healthcare AI company. Through the proprietary AI platform, we're integrating real-world data and advanced analytics to automate high-precision patient identification, enable diverse global recruitment, and support better protocol design. This allows us to match patients to complex oncology and rare-disease trials more efficiently while ensuring Indian and under-represented populations are appropriately included.

AI-enabled patient identification is reducing screen-failure rates and site burden, while real-time insights enable proactive risk-based monitoring and cleaner databases. Simultaneously, Veeda's own platforms (CTMS, EDC, LIMS) are converting unstructured documents into actionable analytics and live dashboards. Together, these capabilities shorten cycle times, improve data quality, and make our Clinical Trials SBU more scalable and differentiated.

Is Veeda planning to join the newly established industry body for the CRDMO sector – Innovative Pharmaceutical Services Organization (IPSO)?

As an integrated CRO with four SBUs covering preclinical to late?phase clinical research, Veeda is strongly supportive of any platform that brings together Indian CRDMOs to raise standards, advocate for science?based regulation and build India's global brand. IPSO is a welcome initiative in that direction.

We are engaging with industry bodies to understand how best Veeda can contribute. Whether through formal membership or collaborative working groups, our intent is clear: we will be an active, constructive voice on issues such as ethical clinical trial conduct, quality harmonisation between Indian and global sites, AI and data governance, and enabling policies for biologics and biosimilars. Regardless of the formal structure, Veeda will continue to work closely with regulators, policymakers and peer organisations to ensure that India's CRDMO sector is viewed as a provider of complex, innovation?driven solutions—not just a low?cost services hub.

Union Budget 2026–27 has announced the Biopharma Shakti programme for strengthening India's end?to?end ecosystem for biologics and biosimilars. How does Veeda plan to leverage this new development?

Over the past few years, we have built our Biopharma unit which already offers analytical and functional characterisation of biologics, cell line and process development and clinical bioanalysis support for large molecules. The Biopharma Shakti programme can catalyse three things for Veeda and its clients.

First, it can accelerate domestic biopharma innovation by improving access to infrastructure funding and collaborative platforms; this is particularly relevant for small and emerging biotechs, a segment where Veeda already has strong relationships.

Second, it can help harmonise regulatory expectations around biosimilars and advanced therapies, where Veeda's experience in GLP studies and multi?country clinical trials gives us practical insight into global requirements.

Third, it creates a framework for integrating India's biologics manufacturing and R&D strengths with advanced clinical development—including AI?enabled patient recruitment and real?world data analysis—areas where Veeda is already investing.

Our intent is to work with clients and policymakers so that Biopharma Shakti translates into more first?in?class and best?in?class biologics being developed in and from India. Veeda is open for collaborations with technology-focused and like-minded peers. We look forward to meaningful association that translates into concrete deliverables and adds value to our objective of improving healthcare access to patients.

India's evolving regulatory reforms, particularly the New Drugs and Clinical Trials Rules and subsequent recent amendments, have significantly narrowed the gap between local and global requirements, making India a reliable and attractive partner for global clinical trials. The reforms have focused on modernising the clinical research ecosystem, streamlining approval processes, and adopting international best practices. These changes have promoted high-quality clinical trials and brought Indian standards closer to those of the US FDA and EMA. Indian guidelines now emphasize robust data collection, Good Clinical Practice (GCP) compliance, and transparent trial registration, all of which are aligned with global expectations.

In your opinion, what are the current challenges and trends facing the CRO sector in India? What needs to be done to address those challenges?

India’s CRO sector is at an inflection point. On one hand, there is clear growth in complex clinical trials, oncology and biotherapeutics; on the other, there are structural challenges. Competition from global CROs in China and Eastern Europe is intensifying, while clients are simultaneously demanding faster timelines, higher data quality and more diverse patient populations—especially in oncology and rare diseases.

To address a key trend which include the shift from pure BA/BE work to innovative and late?phase trials, India needs consistent, predictable regulation with clear service?level timelines; digitalisation of approvals and ethics processes; and explicit guidance on the use of AI and real?world data in clinical development. We believe Indian CROs that combine global?standard quality, technology?enabled execution and deep therapeutic specialisation will emerge as strategic partners.

What are your views on the growing use of AI in drug discovery? How is Veeda helping the pharma industry in this direction, both nationally and internationally?

AI is fundamentally changing how drugs are discovered, developed and tested. While much attention is on target identification and molecule design, some of the most immediate impact is in clinical development. In 2025, Veeda has adopted an AI?powered platform into its clinical trials network which leverages real?world data to automate patient identification with high precision, enable more diverse and globally representative patient selection, and improve trial design and monitoring. With this Veeda is in a position to match patients to complex oncology and rare?disease trials faster, reduce screen?fail rates, and ensure better representation of non?Caucasian populations, including Indian patients.

In parallel, Veeda’s own platforms leverage AI to transform documents into actionable analytics and provide real?time tracking and insights across studies. This combination of external and in?house application of digital technology and real-world data is enhancing speed, quality and data integrity in our Clinical Trials SBU.

In the coming 5 years from now, no Indian CROs will grow or survive without the use of artificial intelligence as AI?enabled patient identification and real?world data integration allows Indian CROs to run more globally competitive trials—especially in oncology—where speed, diversity and data depth are critical. It strengthens India’s value proposition from “cost?efficient” to “innovation?driven”, enabling global pharma and biotech companies to run sophisticated, multi?regional studies anchored out of India. Veeda’s goal is to be at the forefront of this transition: using AI as a practical tool to shorten development timelines, improve patient outcomes and make India a core node in the world’s innovation pipeline.

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