The Role and Responsibilities of the Medical Science Liaison

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The MSL is a field-based representative whose mission is to foster collaborative relationships with opinion leaders and to facilitate the exchange of unbiased scientific information between the medical community and the company.  

“...[MSLs are] catalysts of collaboration between pharmaceutical companies and thought leaders. MSLs are essential conduits to the quality and success of transmission of timely information, research resources, and business intelligence.”  

-Jane Chin, The MSL Institute

**MSL Qualifications**

- PharmD, MD, or PhD\(^1,2\)
- Excellent communication and presentation skills\(^1,2\)
- Ability to travel\(^1,3\)

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History of the MSL

- Previously, sales representatives served as the major information source for all customer groups

- MSL concept was originated in 1967 at the Upjohn Company
  - With increasing sophistication of pharmaceuticals, more knowledgeable personnel were needed to facilitate scientific exchange
  - Created to provide educational awareness and to leverage Upjohn products into ongoing research
  - Comprised of a group of technical field-based sales representatives
  - Reported to sales and marketing

- The group was very successful
  - Within 16 months the group grew from 5 to 20 MSLs

MSL Objectives

- Develop professional relationships with the healthcare community, particularly key opinion leaders, through peer to peer contact\(^1,2\)

- Facilitate the generation of clinical and preclinical scientific data on company products\(^1,2\)

- Maintain scientific expertise of company products and related therapeutic areas\(^2,3\)

- Provide scientific information and educational support\(^2,3\)

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Sliding Threshold: Medical Science Liaison

- Variables
- Company Culture
- Product Lifecycle
State of the Industry

- Public Law No. 111-148 (HR 3590)
- Pharma Trends
- Medical Device
- Genetic Laboratories
- Diagnostic Laboratories
Outsourced MSLs are a new option for pharmaceutical or biotechnology companies\(^1\)

Contract Medical Organizations (CMO) appeared in the mid 1990s\(^1\)
- Scientific Oriented Solutions (SOS-Atlanta): 1997

Provide the same functions as internal teams\(^1\)

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**MSL Resources**

- The MSL Institute [http://mslinstitute.com](http://mslinstitute.com), Jane Chin.


MSL Objectives: Interactions with Key Opinion Leaders

- Provide fair and balanced information on the benefits and risks of products, therapeutic options, and the disease state\(^1\)
- Foster collaboration and partnering between opinion leaders and the company\(^2\)
- Obtain feedback and advice about company products or pipeline through peer-to-peer interactions and advisory boards\(^2\)
- Train and develop speakers on the company’s products\(^2\)

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MSL Objectives: Support Research Endeavors

- Act as a conduit for unsolicited, investigator-initiated research proposals by facilitation proposal, approval, completion, presentation, and publication of studies\(^1\)

- Identify investigators appropriate for clinical trials\(^1,2\)

- Increase knowledge in the community of product or pipeline research activities\(^2\)

MSL Objectives: Maintain Scientific Expertise of Products and Disease State

- Keep abreast of cutting edge research and literature in therapeutic area¹

- Attend scientific meetings and symposia¹,²
  - Provide synopsis of information presented to internal colleagues¹
  - Gather business intelligence and report back to their respective company¹

- Receive internal training by expert external guests and internal colleagues¹

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MSL Objectives: Provide Scientific Information and Educational Support

- Discuss disease state or product information through peer-to-peer interactions with opinion leaders (on and off-label)\(^1,2\)

- Aid in providing medical information to unsolicited requests\(^2\)

- Deliver presentations to the health care community and formulary decision makers\(^1,2\)

- Support medical or scientific activities at conferences or meetings\(^1,2\)

- Conduct medical educational training for internal partners\(^2\)

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Internal Partnerships

- Sales
- Marketing
- Clinical Development
- Research and Development
- Medical Affairs and Medical Information
- Managed Markets