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# The Role and Responsibilities of the Medical Science Liaison

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# Description of the Medical Science Liaison

- 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<sup>1</sup>
- “[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<sup>2</sup>

# MSL Qualifications

- PharmD, MD, or PhD<sup>1,2</sup>
- Excellent communication and presentation skills<sup>1,2</sup>
- Ability to travel<sup>1,3</sup>

# History of the MSL

- Previously, sales representatives served as the major information source for all customer groups<sup>1</sup>
- MSL concept was originated in 1967 at the Upjohn Company<sup>1,2,3</sup>
  - With increasing sophistication of pharmaceuticals, more knowledgeable personell were needed to facilitate scientific exchange<sup>1,2</sup>
  - Created to provide educational awareness and to leverage Upjohn products into ongoing research<sup>1,2,3</sup>
  - Comprised of a group of technical field-based sales representatives<sup>1</sup>
  - Reported to sales and marketing<sup>1,3</sup>
- The group was very successful<sup>2</sup>
  - Within 16 months the group grew from 5 to 20 MSLs<sup>1</sup>

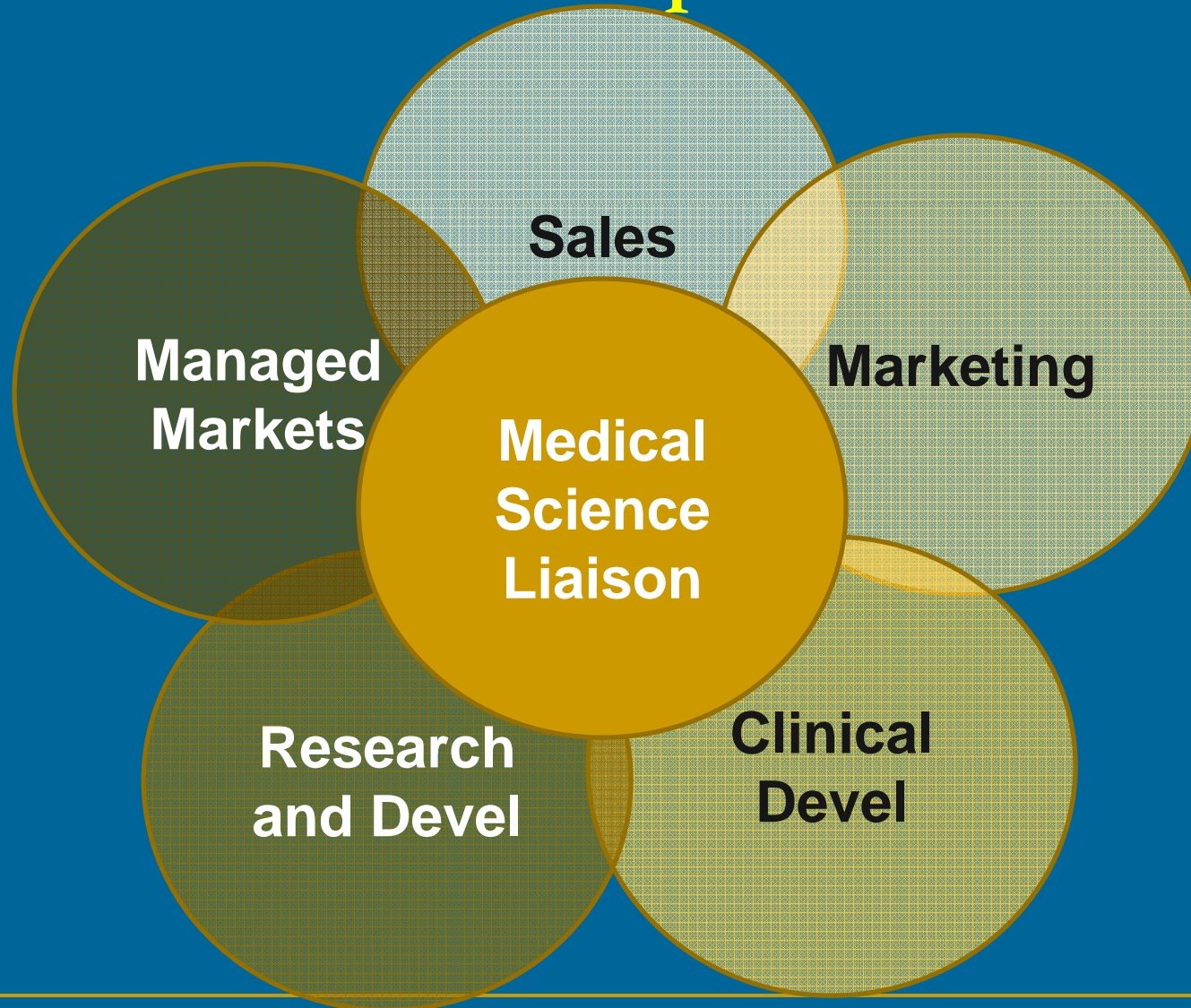
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1. Morgan et al. History and Evolution of Field Based Medical Programs. *Drug Information Journal*, 2000. 2. Morris K et al. Return on Science: Diverse Roles of Today's Medical Science Liaisons. Science Oriented Solutions: [www.medicalaffairs.com](http://www.medicalaffairs.com). 3. Albert E et al. The Medical Science Liaison: An A to Z Guide, 2007.

# MSL Objectives

- Develop professional relationships with the healthcare community, particularly key opinion leaders, through peer to peer contact<sup>1,2</sup>
- Facilitate the generation of clinical and preclinical scientific data on company products<sup>1,2</sup>
- Maintain scientific expertise of company products and related therapeutic areas<sup>2,3</sup>
- Provide scientific information and educational support<sup>2,3</sup>

# Internal Partnerships



# Sliding Threshold: Medical Science Liaison



Sales

Science

- Variables
- Company Culture
- Product Lifecycle

# State of the Industry



- Public Law No. 111-148 (HR 3590)
- Pharma Trends
- Medical Device
- Genetic Laboratories
- Diagnostic Laboratories



# The Outsourced MSL

- Outsourced MSLs are a new option for pharmaceutical or biotechnology companies<sup>1</sup>
- Contract Medical Organizations (CMO) appeared in the mid 1990s<sup>1</sup>
  - Scientific Oriented Solutions (SOS-Atlanta): 1997
- Provide the same functions as internal teams<sup>1</sup>

# MSL Resources

- The MSL Institute <http://mslinstitute.com>, Jane Chin.
- The Medical Science Liaison: An A to Z Guide. Erin Albert, 2007.
- History and Evolution of Field Based Medical Programs. Morgan et al. *Drug Information Journal*, 2000.
- Alternative Careers in Science: Leaving the Ivory Tower. Cynthia Robbins-Roth, 2006.

# 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<sup>1</sup>
- Foster collaboration and partnering between opinion leaders and the company<sup>2</sup>
- Obtain feedback and advice about company products or pipeline through peer-to-peer interactions and advisory boards<sup>2</sup>
- Train and develop speakers on the company's products<sup>2</sup>

# 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<sup>1</sup>
- Identify investigators appropriate for clinical trials<sup>1,2</sup>
- Increase knowledge in the community of product or pipeline research activities<sup>2</sup>

# MSL Objectives: Maintain Scientific Expertise of Products and Disease State

- Keep abreast of cutting edge research and literature in therapeutic area<sup>1</sup>
- Attend scientific meetings and symposia<sup>1,2</sup>
  - Provide synopsis of information presented to internal colleagues<sup>1</sup>
  - Gather business intelligence and report back to their respective company<sup>1</sup>
- Receive internal training by expert external guests and internal colleagues<sup>1</sup>

# 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)<sup>1,2</sup>
- Aid in providing medical information to unsolicited requests<sup>2</sup>
- Deliver presentations to the health care community and formulary decision makers<sup>1,2</sup>
- Support medical or scientific activities at conferences or meetings<sup>1,2</sup>
- Conduct medical educational training for internal partners<sup>2</sup>

# Internal Partnerships

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