

THE IMPORTANCE OF Cross-Functional INTEGRATION



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*“Coming together is a beginning; Keeping together is progress;
Working together is success.”*

– HENRY FORD

Due to their organizational structure, many pharmaceutical companies are often faced with the challenges that arise from working in silos. Although the benefits of collaborating as a unified team are generally understood, the practice of working independently or solely within a function is reinforced by:

- **Long lists of tasks** that need to be completed
- **Limited transparency** into other groups
- **Lack of process** to direct integration

These behaviors are typically present not only within the Medical Affairs team but also across the larger organization; silos occur at many different levels. Thus, identifying the areas of overlap and the channels for synergies is crucial to ensuring a truly integrated company.

Below are a few examples of key programs where integration can maximize impact.



Medical Launch Strategy

Integration across Medical Affairs

Medical Affairs teams are normally structured in a manner that encourages separation. Scientific Communications focuses on abstracts and manuscripts, Medical Information runs the call center and writes response letters, and Field Medical engages key opinion leaders. Each team has plenty of work to fill their schedules, and they do not appear to require each other's support. However, on deeper examination, the interdependencies become evident. For instance, Medical Information relies on the publication of data to create response letters, while Field Medical needs to be aware of abstract and manuscript releases for engagement planning, during which they may utilize slide decks, FAQs, and other materials developed by Scientific Communications and Medical Information. Thus, transparency of the publication plan is important across Medical Affairs.

At launch, alignment of priorities, identification of these interdependencies, and transparency of planning is of utmost importance to increase efficiencies and amplify impact, given quickly moving timelines and potentially limited resources. The process for developing a Medical Launch Strategy involves cross-functional input at every step: assessing the current landscape and available data, identifying unmet needs, determining key opportunities and challenges, defining the objectives and strategic imperatives for launch, and solidifying tactical planning. A clear Medical Launch Strategy ensures the team functions as an integrated unit.



Insights Program

Integration across Medical Affairs and Incorporation of Cross-functional Partners

When considering insights, what first comes to mind is the Field Medical team collecting information from their one-on-one engagements with healthcare providers. However, insights come from many different sources from within the Medical Affairs team, such as Medical Information requests and advisory boards, as well as from other functions, such as competitive intelligence reports, market research, and feedback on clinical trials.

Given the variety of methods of insight collection, to be most effective, an insights program should be an integrated program led by Medical Affairs. The Medical Affairs team needs first to gather insights not only across their functions but also across the other functions of the organization, second to analyze the insights to identify those that are actionable, third to develop an action plan around the key insights, and fourth to create a feedback loop to communicate the plan and the results to the entire organization. Integration ensures that insights from all perspectives are assessed to determine which actions will be most impactful to the business and should be prioritized.



Data Generation Program

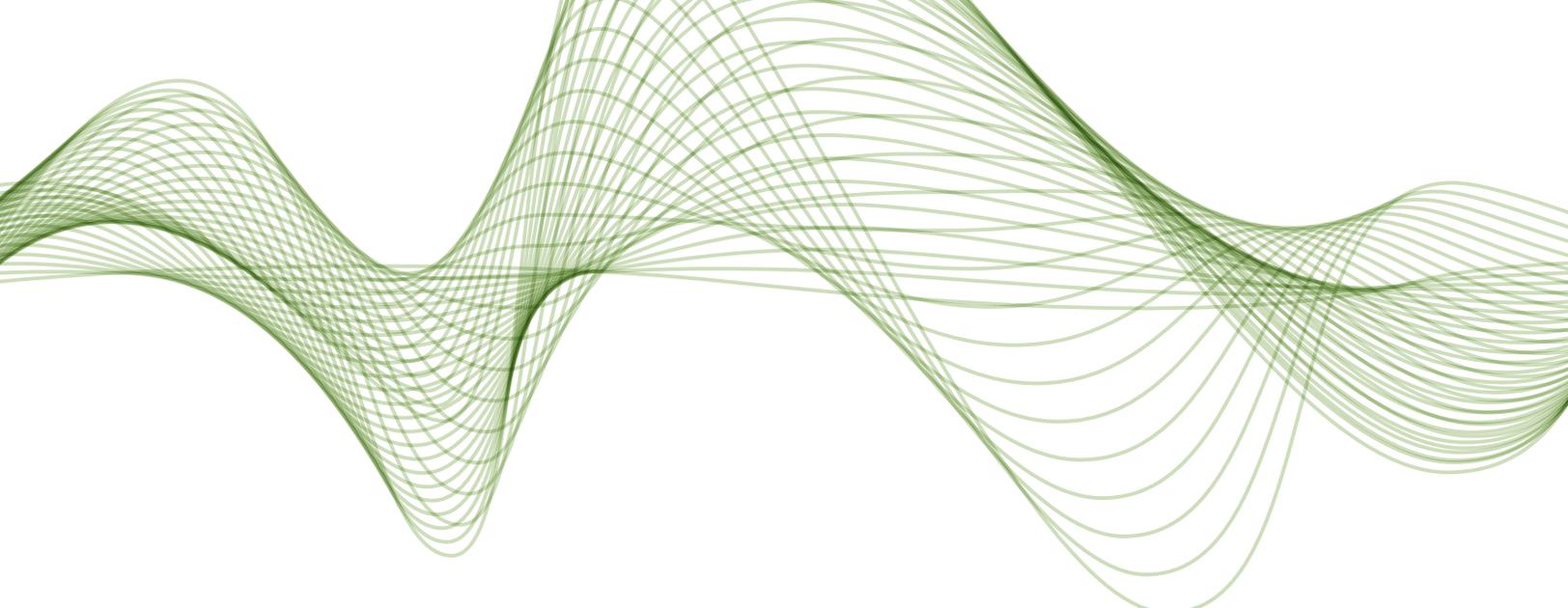
Integration across the Organization

Although the clinical development program supports regulatory approval, the data do not always answer all the questions that arise in clinical practice. Thus, additional data generation is needed to support treatment and reimbursement decisions. Medical Affairs, Research & Development, and Commercial all typically recognize the limitations of the data from the clinical program, and based on their perspectives, can identify remaining questions that need to be answered. In addition, a variety of functions can lead data generation projects: HEOR is responsible for real-world data, Medical Affairs leads the investigator-sponsored trials strategy, Clinical Development may be involved in collaborative trials, and Market Access might conduct market research.

Although these efforts may independently answer some key questions, data generation is most impactful when it is an integrated program directed by a clear strategy. Unified data generation programs are built by first bringing cross-functional teams from across the organization together to leverage different perspectives to identify and prioritize data gaps. Then, an assessment of existing data and ongoing projects needs to be done for each gap. Depending on what is already available, cross-functional action plans are established and executed. An integrated plan ensures projects are complementary and resources are maximized.

The Zipher Medical Affairs team understands the importance of breaking down silos and establishing integrated programs to expand impact and increase value.

Many of our services are focused on bringing cross-functional teams together, with Medical Launch Strategies, Insights Programs, and Data Generation Programs being just a few examples. In addition, Zipher Medical Affairs is now a Lumanity business, and as part of a larger organization focused on integration across pharmaceutical companies, we work with our partners from Lumanity to bring together diverse perspectives and unique clinical, scientific, and functional expertise to uncover innovative, yet pragmatic, approaches to a wide variety of projects and programs.



Learn more about how Zipher can help your team develop an aligned medical strategy

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