

Julie Cahill, MD

VP, Consulting and Medical Director Services



The Importance of Team Engagement

In the development of an aligned,
impactful medical strategy

Introduction

Zipher partnered with a US-based Alliance involving two large pharmaceutical companies to develop a Medical Strategy for a relatively new immuno-oncology agent. The Medical Affairs Alliance faced three significant challenges:

1. The Medical Strategy was for a new immuno-oncology agent that was at multiple stages of development—post-launch, peri-launch, and earlier – in four different tumor types.
2. Given the broad needs with varying stages of development across multiple indications and the limited resources of Medical Affairs, the two companies needed guidance to align on priorities and key tactics.
3. As typical, the Medical Affairs teams were facing high expectations for execution of numerous activities, but they also needed to make an impact, not just check boxes.

Authored by Zipher Medical Affairs Co., LLC now part of Lumanity.

The objective

Over three months, the team needed to develop a clear, aligned Medical Strategy for the Alliance to direct their activities for the upcoming year to ensure maximum impact.

The solution

Zipher facilitated a cross-functional, cross-Alliance collaboration to develop an aligned Medical strategy. This process included 6 key steps:

1. Situational analysis

Pulling together available internal data, details about the patient journey and unmet needs, information about the evolving competitive landscape in each tumor type, and estimated clinical development timelines, the Zipher team conducted an assessment of the current situation and identified potential opportunities and challenges. A summary slide deck was created and vetted with the Alliance—a collaboration that helped level set the team and guide strategy development.

2. Strategic workshop

Utilizing the information gained from the situational analysis, the Zipher team, along with the Medical Directors, led a cross-functional, cross-Alliance meeting, which included members from publications, the Medical field team, HEOR, and medical information, as well as from market access. During the interactive workshop, the Medical Directors briefly presented available background information, and then, Zipher led four breakout groups, one for each tumor type, through the development of a SWOT. Working together, the team then agreed on a prioritized pan-tumor SWOT, identified the key opportunities and challenges across indications, and begin drafting strategic imperatives. Post-workshop, the Zipher team worked with the Medical Directors to finalize this strategic framework.

3. Tactical planning

Once the strategy was solidified, the Zipher team worked with each Medical function to develop tactics that were aligned with the imperatives and prioritized based on potential to impact the strategic goals.

4. Cross-functional alignment

A follow-up cross-functional, cross-Alliance meeting was then held to align the tactical plans across the teams, define any key programs across Medical, and determine points of interdependency that could impact timelines.

5. Senior management approval

With all the pieces of the Medical Strategy in place, the Zipher team compiled the document and created a high-level executive summary and a strategic narrative to enhance the medical director presentation to senior management. This allowed for a productive budget approval process.

6. Program management for execution

After approval was granted, the Zipher team then developed a tracker and dashboard to monitor the progress of the entire Medical Affairs team, allowing for quick review of project status and identification of any potential risks. The internal project managers were then trained on these platforms to ensure successful execution of the Medical Affairs strategy throughout the year.

The results

Through partnership with the Zipher team, this US-based Alliance efficiently developed a clear, aligned Medical Strategy including prioritized, impactful tactics, that allowed them to successfully use their resources to demonstrate the value of Medical Affairs in the advancement of this new immuno-oncology agent.



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