

## INTRODUCTION

- Medical Science Liaisons (MSLs) are healthcare professionals employed by the pharmaceutical industry to ensure the safe and effective use of medications
- MSL responsibilities include:<sup>1</sup>
  - Fostering and establishing relationships with Key Opinion Leaders (KOLs)
  - Disseminating timely and accurate medical information to KOLs
  - Exploring scientific interests of KOLs to determine unmet medical needs
  - Providing medical insights to support internal stakeholders
  - Assisting with speaker training and development
- MSL responsibilities vary depending on therapeutic area (TA), e.g. oncology MSLs focus on clinical trial support more than other TAs
- MSL performance cannot be measured using a sales model<sup>2</sup>
- MSL success must be measured through a combination of quantitative and qualitative metrics<sup>2</sup>
- Currently, there is no consensus by field medical management on the best method to evaluate MSLs as their role continues to evolve

## OBJECTIVES

- To determine which measures pharmaceutical companies utilize to assess the effectiveness of their oncology field medical personnel
- To assess the value associated with these measures by oncology field medical Managers/Directors and MSLs

## METHODS

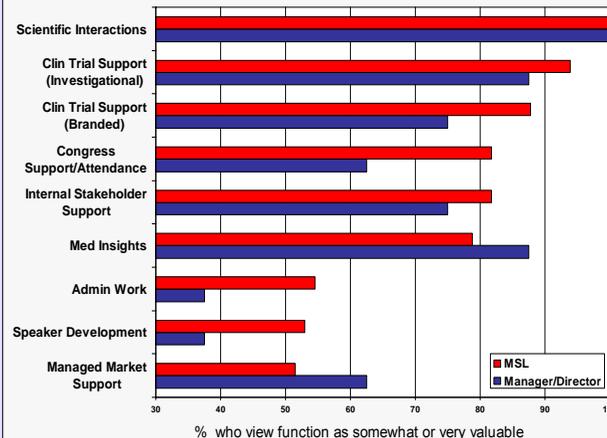
- A 23-question electronic survey was sent via Zoomerang (online survey software) to United States oncology field medical directors across nine pharmaceutical companies to distribute to their respective field medical teams
- The survey was open from January to February 2010
- Survey participants were informed that participation was confidential and anonymous; names of individuals or companies were not collected
- Survey questions were differentiated by the responders' field medical role (i.e. Oncology MSL versus Manager/Director)
- The survey collected the following information:
  - Demographics
  - % time dedicated to job functions
  - Perceived value of job functions
  - Utility of quantitative and qualitative metrics
  - Perceived value of quantitative and qualitative metrics
- A Likert scale was used for value assessment [not valuable, not very valuable, neutral, somewhat valuable, very valuable, not applicable]

## RESULTS

**Table 1.** Survey Respondent Demographics (n=74)

Professional Background Experience	N (%)
Ph.D.	21 (28%)
Physician (MD, DO)	2 (3%)
Pharmacy (RPh, PharmD)	26 (35%)
Nursing (RN, NP, etc)	17 (23%)
Other (e.g. MS, PA, BA)	10 (14%)
Current Role in Oncology Field Medical	
Medical Science Liaison	66 (89%)
Region Associate Director/Manager	4 (5%)
Director	4 (5%)
Length of Time in Current Role	
0 – 2 years	7 (9%)
2 – 5 years	30 (41%)
5 – 10 years	23 (31%)
> 10 years	14 (19%)
# of Approved Products Currently Supporting	
1 – 2	49 (66%)
3 – 4	21 (29%)
≥ 5	4 (5%)

**Figure 1.** Value Associated with Oncology MSL Responsibilities

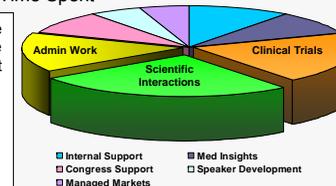


MSLs consider all job responsibilities to be more valuable than Managers/Directors with the exception of gaining medical insights and managed market support

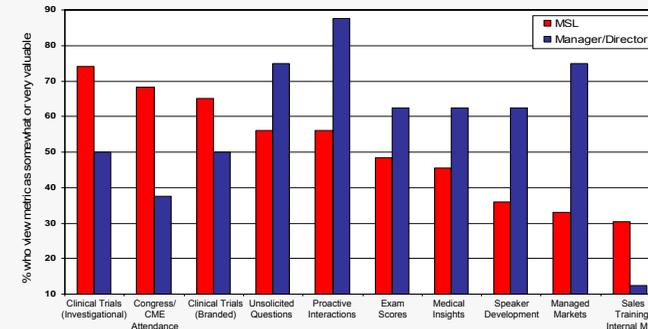
**Figure 2.** Oncology MSL Reported Time Spent

Manager/Director expectations for time dedicated to MSL job functions are approximately equal to actual time spent by the MSLs, with the exception of:

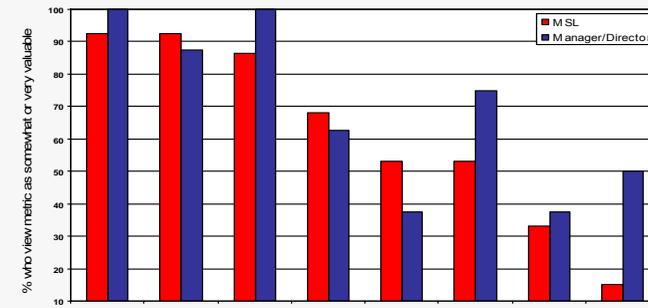
- More time should be spent on scientific interactions with KOLs
- Less time should be spent on administrative work and obtaining medical insights



**Figure 3.** Perceived Value of Quantitative Metrics



**Figure 4.** Perceived Value of Qualitative Metrics



**Table 2.** Average Perceived Value Associated with Metrics\*

	% MSLs	% Directors
Quantitative	51.28	57.5
Qualitative	61.6	68.75

\* Value is sum of somewhat valuable and very valuable

## DISCUSSION

- Directors think MSLs should spend more time on KOL interactions, underscoring the key responsibility of developing KOL relationships
- Oncology MSLs place a strong emphasis on clinical trial support, specifically for investigational products, likely because oncology is a TA with evolving treatment modalities
- Results commonly show a direct correlation between perceived value of the job function and value of the metric (e.g. managed market support is valued more by directors, as are the quantitative and qualitative metrics associated with it)
- Qualitative metrics are valued more than quantitative metrics:
  - Qualitative metrics are subject to bias and remain difficult to measure, but allow for movement away from a sales-centric model
- A personalized effectiveness model for MSL assessment should be considered:
  - MSLs have unique professional backgrounds/experiences, are responsible for different geographies, and face access issues
  - Variance of job responsibilities across TAs should be accounted for
  - MSLs have other responsibilities not considered core to the position
- Limitations of this study include:
  - Survey was anonymous and not necessarily representative of all companies contacted
  - Small number of respondents from Managers/Directors
  - Results may not be representative of all TAs
  - Free-text responses for other metrics utilized were consistent with the listed metrics
  - The question of which metric is more valuable – quantitative or qualitative – was not specifically asked

## CONCLUSION

- Oncology MSLs and managers/directors view scientific interactions with KOLs and clinical trial support as the most valuable job responsibilities
- The quantitative and qualitative metrics presented in this survey are utilized by at least 80% of oncology field medical teams
- The value of a job function and metrics associated with the job function differ between MSLs' perceptions and management expectations
- Further research is necessary to create and validate a personalized effectiveness model for MSL assessment

## REFERENCES

- Marrone CM, Bass JL, Klinger CJ. Survey of Medical Liaison Practices Across the Pharmaceutical Industry. Drug Information Journal. 2007;41:457-70.
- Winter-Sperry RL, Mann A. Deep Impact. Pharmaceutical Executive. 2006 Jul.

## DISCLOSURES & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Dr. Robin Winter-Sperry is a paid employee of Scientific Advantage, LLC. All other authors are paid employees of Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey. The authors would like to acknowledge: Mark Page, PharmD; Nabomita Hore, PharmD; Karen Cohen, PharmD; Eileen O'Donnell; and Doug Young, PhD