

# BUILDING A MEDICAL AFFAIRS FUNCTION

*Insights from Medical Affairs Leaders*



We recently interviewed Medical Affairs leaders in a range of pharma companies to discover how they build successful Medical Affairs functions. While companies structure their Medical Affairs teams differently based on their size and product portfolio, there are a number of common success factors to deliver the function's key objective to lead evidence generation post-approval and communicate the key insights to the physician community.

## 1 — **Global** teams focus on strategy, leveraging feedback from local and regional teams

- Stands as a separate function, with teams that report vertically to the Head of R&D, a BU Head, or the CEO
  - This ensures independence, and a direct input into company strategy
- Comprises dedicated teams for evidence generation and scientific communications and publications
  - Teams are organised by therapeutic area
  - Real World Evidence is an important component of Medical Affairs
- Delivers the strategy through local and regional teams:
  - Creates and communicates the global medical strategy, which includes an annual plan for evidence generation and scientific communication
  - Leverages input from local and regional teams to evolve the global strategy
  - Approves studies proposed by local and regional teams

## 2 — **Regional** teams act as a bridge between local and global teams

- Pharma companies have lean regional teams that collaborate closely with local teams, they:
  - Empower local teams to adapt and implement global materials
  - Identify synergies and challenges across countries (e.g. data gaps) and provide feedback to global teams to enable them to shape the strategy
  - Understand and manage the complexity of and advocate for the region

## 3 — **Local** teams are empowered to execute the global strategy

- Typically report within Medical Affairs with a solid line, and to the General Manager (GM) with a dotted line
  - In some larger companies, local teams report with a solid line to the GM
- Local teams are comprised of MSLs and Medical Directors, they:
  - Adapt and implement the global strategy across the physician community
  - Provide feedback from physicians (e.g. on data gaps) and escalate requests (e.g. for Investigator Initiated Trials) to regional and global teams
  - Pre-launch, MSLs shape the market and prepare the company for launch
  - Post-launch, MSLs engage with physicians creatively to further shape the market and gather insight

Medical Affairs leaders succeed by building global teams that develop and communicate the medical evidence to physicians with a clear strategy. Local teams, with the support of regional teams, efficiently adapt and execute the strategy in their markets. Novasecta has significant experience in supporting Medical Affairs functions to be successful. Please contact Andrew Bell on [abell@novasecta.com](mailto:abell@novasecta.com) or John Gregson on [jgregson@novasecta.com](mailto:jgregson@novasecta.com) to discuss how we could support you.