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At the Forefront of Drug Discovery and Development: Small to Midsize Biotech/Biopharma Companies are the Leaders of Innovation



By Peter Benton, president and COO of Worldwide Clinical Trials

Today, the innovators of drug discovery and development are the smaller, biotech and biopharma companies around the world. According to a report from HBM Partners AG, in the past several years, more than 60% of new drugs approved originated at small and midsize companies – those outside the 30 largest pharmaceutical firms.

After having spent almost 20 years working in this industry – not only in large pharma but in clinical research serving small to midsize biotech and biopharma companies – I continually think about innovation and why the smaller companies are driving innovation. Larger companies want and desire to be innovative, but in reality most (though not all) can be more risk-averse, and therefore less willing to take chances on an unlikely new

drug. Everyone loves new molecular entities and new treatment areas, but the financial rewards are greater when risk is adjusted by expanding upon an existing therapy.

There also is a lot more complexity in a larger organization – more people to convince, more hurdles to jump, and more competition for who has the next big idea. And there are distractions – more bureaucracy to wade through, changing processes to manage, and larger teams to navigate. Generally, speed and innovation are inversely related to the size of the company; not by design or desire, but by the sheer reality of organizational size and complexity.

Worldwide Clinical Trials: Because We Care

These are the same reasons that innovator companies choose Worldwide Clinical Trials as their clinical research organization (CRO). We have unmatched medical and scientific expertise, rigorous operational processes and commitment to quality that any size pharmaceutical company would expect for their most complex clinical trial, yet we are small enough to deliver the personalized service that every small company needs.

Our clients – big and small – have access to their, and our, entire Worldwide team, from the front-line clinical

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research associate (CRA), to the project manager, to the medical expert and all the way to me and any member of our senior team. We are truly here for our customers when things go wrong and when they go right. As we like to say, and – more importantly – we mean from the bottom of our hearts: “We’re big enough to matter, and small enough to care.”

At Worldwide, we work hard to stand out from the crowd of more than 1,300 CROs around the world. We are big enough to be in the top 15 contract research organizations, but behave as if each customer is our only customer. We focus on what we can do well and will never try to support a study if we aren’t best suited for the project. For our small, innovator clients in particular, Worldwide has demonstrated time and again that we can deliver both the personalized attention they crave and the broad range of clinical research expertise they need to advance their discoveries from clinical development to commercialization.

To learn more, visit our website at www.worldwide.com.