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Five big common missteps in comparator sourcing

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1 Taking a tactical comparator sourcing approach by focusing exclusively on cost

Failure to think long-term about the full clinical supply chain could result in study delays, or even cause a trial to grind to a costly halt. A strategic, fully integrated team approach is required for a successful trial. Such an approach requires taking all key factors into account, such as expiry dates, patient recruitment, number of batches, impact on packaging costs and resupply requirements. Is there a size, thickness (syringe) or dosage consideration?

2 Failing to consider all viable sourcing options

While sourcing comparator drug from the United States for a U.S. study is an intuitive choice, it may not be the only – or the best – strategic option. Out of habit, many sponsors neglect to consider other viable options, such as the possibility of sourcing comparator for a U.S. study from the European Union.

3 Making assumptions about the availability of comparator drugs

For commercial and regulatory reasons, every drug may not be available in ample supply in every market. Even if a comparator is available in a particular country, it may not be possible to source or use it in a clinical study.

4 Overlooking other necessary trial components

It's important to note that sourcing comparator may also involve the sourcing of co-medication or background medication, rescue medication, ancillary supplies such as needles, tubing and IV bags for biologic comparators.

5 Bringing a vendor aboard late in the game

All too often, a sponsor engages with a provider of comparator drugs late in the development process and after key details have been finalized. At that point, there is little opportunity for the supply chain manager to offer recommendations that could increase the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the trial.

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