

Approaches to Defining Comparator Sourcing Strategy



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Regardless of the supplier model selected, there are three standard approaches to defining a comparator sourcing strategy: central, local and a hybrid of the two.

Central

A central sourcing approach refers to the procurement (and packaging and labelling) of a comparator product in one single country for distribution to/use within all countries participating in a clinical trial.

Central sourcing is typically used for larger studies and is best suited to trials involving countries with straightforward import processes. Central sourcing incurs no risk of overstocking local depots (and risking wasted supplies), is less complex to plan expiry extensions and requires lower set-up, storage and management fees in comparison to a local model.

Local

Local sourcing refers to the procurement of a comparator drug product in a country for use within the same country.

This approach is typically used when import processes are long or cumbersome, as it removes the need to ship drugs across borders and is therefore a lower-risk option, especially for temperature-controlled supplies. Returns are sent to local depots, which also eliminates equally drawn-out, resource intensive export activity.

A local sourcing approach may deliver lower freight costs and courier fees but, in contrast with a central sourcing approach, will likely introduce higher set-up, storage and management fees.

Hybrid

A hybrid sourcing model combines specific aspects of both a central and local sourcing approach to provide a bespoke solution able to meet a study's unique requirements. Typically, due to global requirements, there is a need to adopt a hybrid approach because to balance risk, cost and regulatory challenges.

For example, while large drug volume for a global trial maybe cost effectively sourced centrally, due to regulatory challenges it may not be possible to export it into all the required countries. In this instance a hybrid model maybe adopted.

