

Measurable Results – Verastem Oncology

I mean I've worked with a lot of consultants, and I've never had this kind of experience where they say, "Look, you don't want to do this because we saw this happen in another launch." It never would've occurred to us.

My name is Dan Paterson, I'm Chief Operating Officer here at Verastem. Verastem has been around since 2010. We were originally founded based on science out of the Broad and the Whitehead of Harvard and MIT, Bob Weinberg's lab. Really discoveries around the tumor/micro environment and the role they play in really tumors surviving. We launched our first drug in September of this year.

Duvelisib, its brand name is Copiktra, is approved for chronic lymphocytic leukemia and follicular lymphoma. So we acquired Duvelisib about two years ago and we went from a phase-one, phase-two company, at roughly 30 people, to a commercial organization literally overnight. So we brought SVA in to help us really with the launch planning around the operations and the processes, as well as helping us develop our systems.

The most beneficial thing working with SVA was they became part of our team. They helped us make decisions. They were empowered to work as part of the team. They didn't have to come to us for every single decision and they became integrated with the organization. The quantifiable outcome was that we shipped our drug the day we got approval. The systems were up and running, we were able to measure things overnight. There was no way we could have launched without actually putting these systems up in place and it was a compressed timeframe. And we were growing as an organization. I think one of the biggest challenges of the entire project was the fact that we started with literally 30 people and we ended with roughly 180 people. As you can imagine, as you're onboarding new decision-makers in the middle of a project like this, having the processes to really bring people on and have them be part of the process but not redo everything and take it back to the beginning was critical to success of the project. We now have a business where we can literally measure everything that's going on in the field in a way that we couldn't have even imagined when we started the project.

SVA worked with us in a way that I've never ever worked with a consulting firm. They literally were part of the team. They had experience with multiple launches and what they brought was a level of insight that allowed us to make the right decisions.