



Tufts Center for the Study of Drug Development

TUFTS UNIVERSITY

# Impact REPORT

ANALYSIS AND INSIGHT INTO CRITICAL DRUG DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

## Drug sponsors tread cautiously using social media to aid clinical research

*Highest use in patient recruitment; lowest in adverse event monitoring*

- Nearly all sponsors have developed corporate guidelines to address employee use of social media.
- Drug sponsors widely report concerns about violating patient privacy and confidentiality, jeopardizing research integrity, and influencing study volunteer receptivity to participating in clinical trials.
- Patient recruitment through social media is the most actively piloted area, with sponsors planning to expand use in global markets over the next 12 – 18 months.
- Sponsors believe social media can provide valuable input for development planning and protocol design.
- “Social listening” is receiving growing attention, though sponsors differ widely on the value of this approach.
- Patients are using social media to report adverse events, but few sponsors have developed formal policies and practices to gather and evaluate that information.