Site Search

2022 Research Industry Trends

For-Profit

Our Data

Site Search was created by cleaning and combining three public sources: OpenPayments, ClinicalTrials.gov, the Census Bureau.

OpenPayments: The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act ("Obamacare" or the "ACA," passed into law in 2009) provision 42 U.S. Code § 1320a-7h requires pharmaceutical companies to publicly disclose payments they make each year to MDs, DOs, NPs, and PAs. This disclosure includes any payments made to research sites, noting both the name of the principal investigator and what institution they are affiliated with. This data is accessible at https://openpaymentsdata.cms.gov The law only requires disclosure from pharmaceutical companies that manufacture at least one drug sold in the United States. Pharmaceutical companies dutifully report payments made to sites working on phase 2, phase 3, and phase 4 studies, but due to confusion over phase 1 reporting requirements they inconsistently report payments for Phase 1 studies. Our research suggests the OpenPayments dataset includes at least 80% of all payments made to research sites.

ClinicalTrials.gov: The Food and Drug Administration Modernization Act of 1997 ("FDAMA," passed in 1997), requiring the National Institutes of Health to create a public information resource on clinical trials regulated by the FDA. Several pieces of legislation and lawsuits later, the International Committee on Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) created a new policy requiring that for any papers to be published within their member journals, any clinical trials cited must have been registered on ClinicalTrials.gov before patients were enrolled. The law has an exemption for Phase 1 trials. Pharmaceutical companies dutifully report details on their Phase 2, Phase 3, and Phase 4 studies.

Our team matches OpenPayments data to ClinicalTrials data, cleans and normalizes errors, and attributes research payments to the correct sources and recipients. We categorize investigative sites based on for-profit and non-profit status, and ownership. The Site Search database provides the first in-depth look at how research payments are distributed across the clinical landscape.

Key Insights for 2022

Total Payments:

- $7.6B in research payments to investigative sites
- $263MM in payments with no attached principal investigator (PI)

Recipients:

- For-profit sites received $3.5B in payments
- Non-profit sites received $3.7B in payments
- Aggregators* received $87MM in payments

Types of Payments:

- Trial Payments totaled $7.2B
- Non-Trial Payments* totaled $162MM

Trends:

- 2022 US For-Profit Research Payments to Investigative Sites Increased 9.08% Over 2021
- Sponsors spent a small percentage of global R&D budgets on investigative sites

Sponsor	For-Profit US Site Payments	Total Payments to All US Sites	Global R&D Spend	% of Global R&D to For-Profit US Sites
Moderna	$602MM	$703MM	$3.3B	18%
Eli Lilly	$373MM	$466MM	$7.2B	5%
Pfizer	$463MM	$847MM	$11.4B	4%
Abbvie	$155MM	$474MM	$6.5B	2%
Merck	$90MM	$471MM	$13.5B	1%

- The largest research site network by revenue, Velocity Clinical Research, had pharmaceutical companies disclose $245MM in payments to it in 2022, across 85 sites
- The top 20 networks earned $1.22B in 2022, more than a third of total research spend paid to US for-profit sites

** Aggregators are financial intermediary firms that receive payments on behalf of investigative sites.*
** Non-Trial Payments (NTPs) are payments that cannot be linked directly to research trials, such as collaborative agreements and research papers.*

Therapeutics

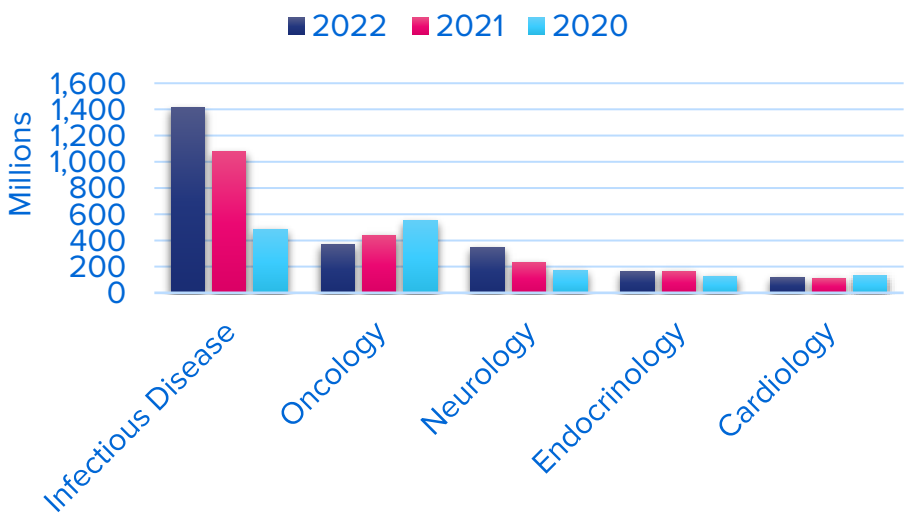
Stayin' Alive

Despite predictions Infectious research would decrease after Warp Speed, mRNA studies have proven resilient in the study of other viral treatments.

Pictures of Lilly

Neurology continued its gains in 2022, fueled by Eli Lilly's landmark Donanemab Alzheimer's Disease studies, which made up 55% of all spending.

YoY Therapeutics



In Remission

Cancer studies declined for a second straight year, dropping another 20% in overall payments, though academic Oncology remained at previous levels.

No Mo' Endo

Despite the success of GLP1 agonists, sponsors did not significantly increase research spend into promising weight loss treatments year-over-year.

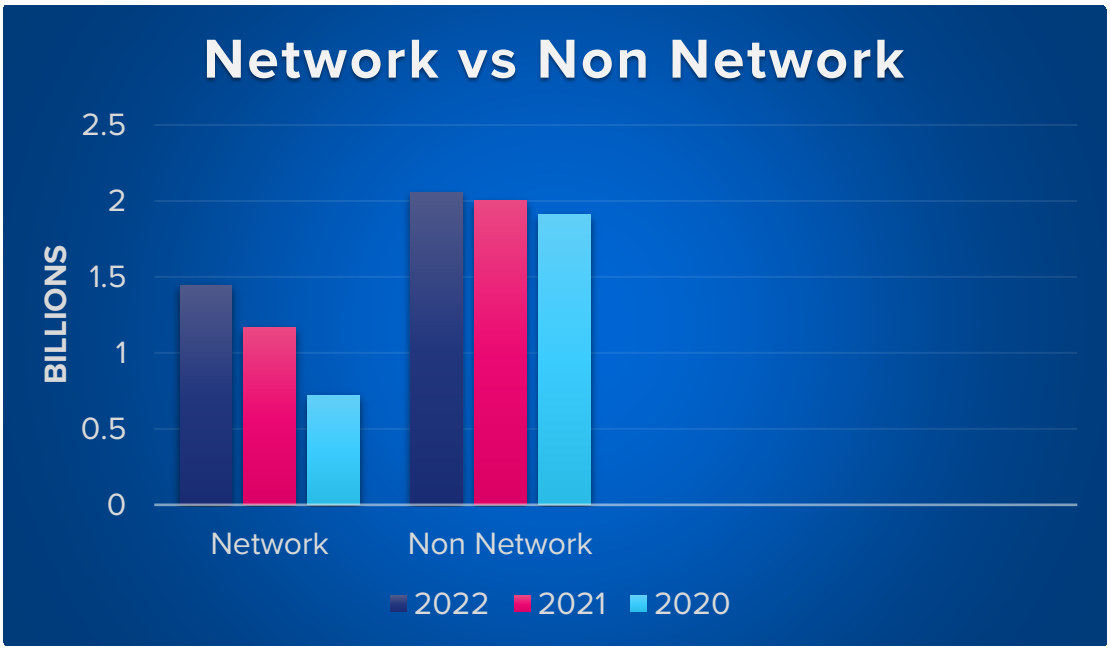
Sites

Network Effect

Site Networks added 40 new locations in 2022, for a total of 565. Site Network revenue has nearly doubled from $699MM in 2020 to $1.4B in 2022.

Indie Rock

Independent sites still make up the vast majority, with over 12,000 in the US. They accounted for $2.1B in research spending, leaving $1.4B for networks.



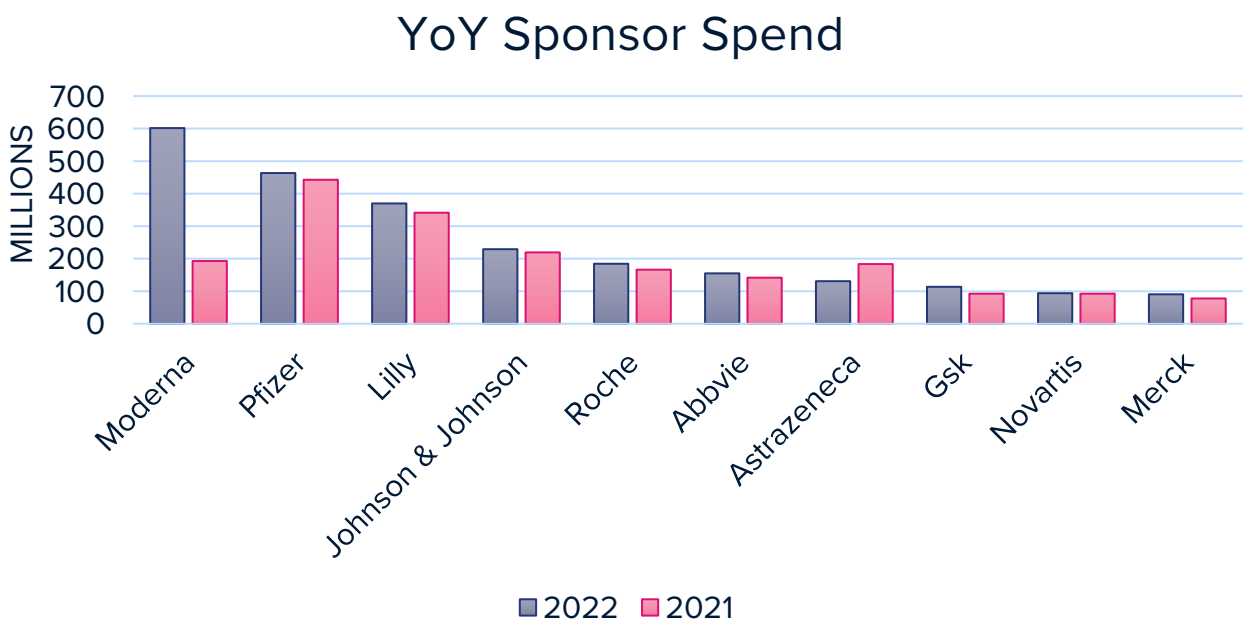
Size Matters

Median earnings at network sites were $1.2MM, while larger independents ($100K+ revenue) earned in $300K per location.

Seeing Stars

230 sites took off in 2022, crossing the $250K revenue threshold. One site grew by 2,280% and took in $3.8MM.

Sponsors



Makin' It Rain

9 of 2022's top 10 sponsors increased for-profit spend YoY. Most gains were modest, but Moderna *tripled* spending, while AstraZeneca pulled back by 29%.

Variety is the Spice

Abbvie, J&J, and AstraZeneca led sponsors in variety, spanning 17 different therapeutic areas. Most large sponsors had at least 9, but Moderna spent in only 3.

M to the R N A

Five of the top six studies by spend were mRNA vaccine studies. COVID-19 studies no longer led the pack, with RSV and Influenza studies gaining ground.

Law of Averages

Moderna spent an average of $16.7MM per study in 2022. Most sponsors with comparable averages were smaller, spending entire budgets on a single study.

Demographics

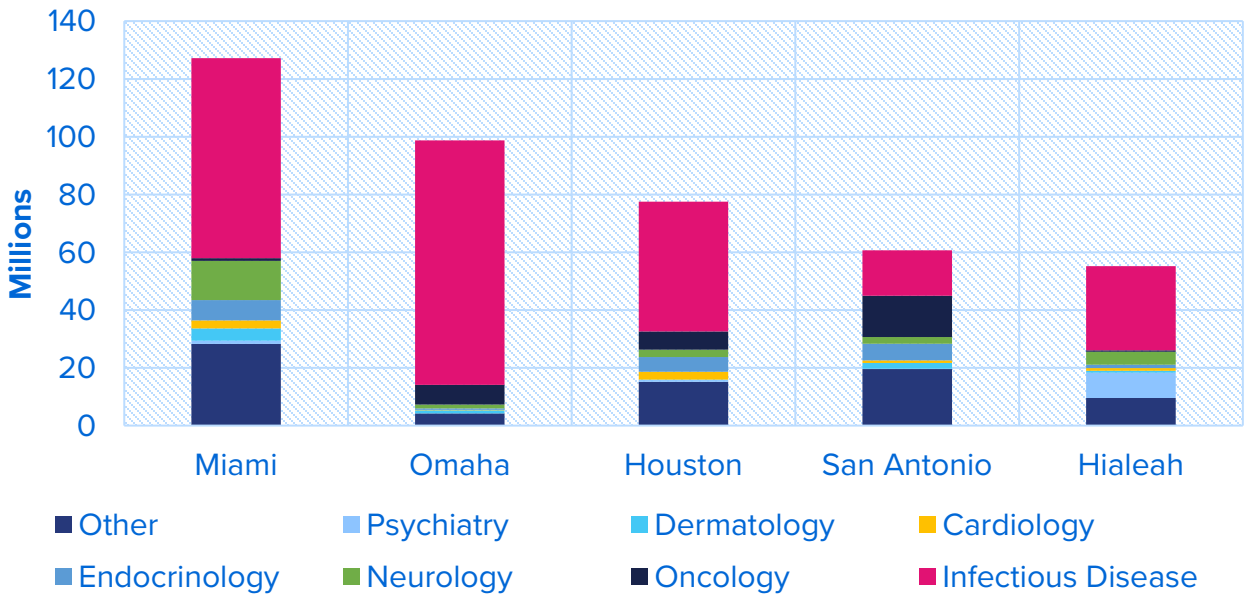
Palms and Plains

Miami, Omaha, Houston, San Antonio, and Hialeah were top five for research spend in 2022. Miami led with $127MM.

It's Infectious

Seven of the top eight cities were buoyed by infectious disease trials. The exception was Nashville, with $41MM in Oncology.

Top Therapeutics by City



Heart of Matters

Omaha had the largest YoY research growth among top cities at 51%. San Antonio and Nashville saw single-digit decreases from 2021.

Neuro Diversity

Neurology's top city – St Louis – had the most diverse metro area. Miami, top five in all specialties other than Oncology, is more diverse than the average US city.

What is Site Search?

Site Search is a comprehensive, searchable database of research payments, organized by site, PI, site ownership, and study. We cross-reference and enrich OpenPayments, CT.gov, and Census data with custom algorithms to provide actionable insights for our clients.

Our customer base spans the research landscape. Sponsors, CROs, site networks, individual sites, and financial firms all utilize our data and business intelligence tools to stay abreast of market trends and make informed decisions.

If you'd like to read more of our research papers, or learn about the products we offer, please visit us at CURE.NET or email SALES@CURE.NET to request a demo.

All figures are based on a combination of publicly-available research payment data, clinical trial data, and proprietary industry information. All statements, insights, and other information contained in this report are provided for research and trend tracking purposes, and not meant to be used as a substitute for audited financials or other non-public information. Nothing in this document should be construed as investment advice.