Pharma Companies Turn to Strategic CDMO Partnerships as Development Needs Evolve



SAN DIEGO, CA, UNITED STATES, September 10, 2026 / EINPresswire.com/ -- Pharmaceutical companies are rethinking how they choose development and manufacturing partners. As pipelines expand into peptides, oligonucleotides, targeted protein degraders and other complex modalities, the old model of hiring a contractor to execute a defined scope of work is giving way to something closer to a strategic partnership. Programs increasingly need partners who can solve unfamiliar technical problems, operate under consistent quality standards across regions, and move quickly without cutting corners.

Molecular Complexity Is Redefining What Partners Are Asked to Do

As drug discovery expands into complex new modalities, the programs often require specialized chemistry, new manufacturing technologies and scientific expertise across multiple stages of development.

That shift matters because complexity tends to introduce failure points earlier in development in route selection, purification strategy or analytical method design.

To meet that need, WuXi AppTec has invested in enabling technologies aimed specifically at harder-to-make molecules. For example, flow chemistry supports continuous manufacturing processes that improve reaction control, safety and scalability, particularly for complex or hazardous reactions. Biocatalysis, using novel enzymes and ultra-high-throughput screening, helps shorten and simplify synthetic routes for challenging small molecules, peptides and

oligonucleotides alike.

In complex molecules like peptides, WuXi AppTec have also developed integrated process approaches such as combining solid-phase and liquid-phase synthesis (SPPS–LPPS hybrid), and advanced purification and API isolation technologies such as tangential flow filtration, continuous flow chromatography and spray drying to help improve yield, process robustness, and scalability.

The result is a partner that can contribute scientific problem-solving rather than simply carrying out a fixed protocol.

When Partners Solve Problems, Programs can Progress

WuXi AppTec resolves complex synthesis and purification challenges through a combination of tailored solid-support strategies, custom synthesis routes, and advanced analytical methods built around each molecule's specific behavior, rather than a one-size-fits-all process.

In one case, a client developing a complex divalent-siRNA-GalNAc conjugate needed a complete CMC package to support an IND filing within eight months, after low yield and purity in single-strand synthesis and purification, along with an unstable, difficult-to-characterize impurity profile in the duplex, threatened the timeline.

Rather than simply executing the client's existing process, WuXi AppTec's team identified new solid-support and synthesis strategies that increased the purity of the crude sense strand by more than 85% and raised final yield by over 90%. The team also built a more robust analytical method capable of separating key impurities from the main peak, while multiple in-house groups coordinated development activities from API through drug product in parallel. The materials were delivered on schedule, and the client met its IND milestone.

Global Quality and Integrated Execution Turn Speed Into a Reliable Advantage

Strategic partnerships also depend on confidence that a partner can perform consistently wherever a program is located. WuXi AppTec addresses this through what it calls a "One Global Quality System," which aligns quality standards, procedures and training across its sites rather than leaving each location to operate under separate local processes.

That consistency becomes a practical advantage when programs need to move quickly. In one case, WuXi AppTec's Couvet, Switzerland site took over Phase 3 manufacturing that a client had previously run at its own facility. Multiple teams completed the process transition and scale-up

— covering equipment compatibility, analytical method validation and materials procurement — within five months, allowing the client to submit its NDA on time.

The same integrated model underpins WuXi AppTec's oral peptide work, where the company has supported more than 70 preclinical and over 10 clinical-phase programs.

Together, these examples show why companies are looking for more than a vendor: they need a partner whose quality systems and technical depth can be trusted across the full development lifecycle.

Short Summary:

Complex modalities like peptides and oligonucleotides need partners who can solve new technical problems, not just execute known ones, a gap WuXi AppTec's platform is built to close.
Global programs need consistent quality across every site, which is why WuXi AppTec operates under a single "One Global Quality System" rather than site-by-site standards.
Competitive and capital pressures make speed essential without sacrificing quality. In real world cases,WuXi AppTec can support clients to meet key milestones with speed.

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