

Asembia 2023 Key Takeaways

May 2023

Members of the VMS team attended Asembia's 2023 Specialty Pharmacy Summit, an industry-leading conference focused on patient access and support. We're sharing our key takeaways from the show, having participated in robust discussions with pharma industry colleagues and general session presentations.



1 Choosing best-in-breed.

There continues to be debate between partnering with all-in-one service providers and best-in-breed providers that can easily integrate with one another. As access, affordability, and adherence grow in their importance for specialty therapies, companies are choosing partners who excel at a specific area but are interoperable with other players when setting up their commercial model.

2 Drugs are growing in specialization and complexity.

Many large pharma companies are evolving their commercial model from supporting blockbuster retail drugs to smaller patient population specialty therapies with a focus in oncology, autoimmune, neuroscience, and rare disease. This also includes cell and gene therapies, which require an intensive focus on patient and provider education and support.

3 Marketplace growth requires a greater need for HCP support.

The growth in the specialty therapy marketplace is creating a greater need for just-in-time education and support for healthcare providers who need to be made aware of new available therapies, the reimbursement processes, and how best to help patients successfully start and stay on therapy.

4 Complex drugs require a higher level of patient support.

Concurrently, the complexities of specialty drugs are necessitating a higher level of patient support services as patients become ever more burdened with financial stress, clinical barriers, and logistical challenges. Patients also face greater difficulties from an access standpoint due to a lack of HCP guidance, complex drug administration, complicated side effects, and emotional burdens.

5 Simply providing affordability options isn't sufficient.

It's critical to consider the whole patient experience when designing patient access and support programs. The needs of patients go beyond reimbursement and require pharma decision-makers to explore ways to support patients more holistically.



6 Pharma continues to seek digital solutions.

Pharma seeks digital solutions to narrow gaps in support and to create greater efficiencies, personalization, ease for the patient, and impact. With the rise of digital technologies used with patient access and support programs, there remains a critical need for the human connection to work symbiotically. To address gaps in patient access to digital technologies, the empathy side of support and the ability to solve outside-of-the-box problems can be achieved through human intervention.

7 Social determinants of health (SDOH) are critical.

SDOH are a critical component of patient access and support programs. Leading solutions consider potential health inequities in order to increase access (inclusive of relevant socioeconomic factors), education requirements, care team composition, and optimal visibility across the care continuum.

8 Value-based contracting continues not to deliver on a value promise.

Few patient access and support programs use value-based contracts as measurement, patient scale, and overall results continue to be challenged. However, those patient engagement and adherence solution providers that can provide outcomes-based measurement will become critical for pharma to prove and defend the value of breakthroughs and fast-track designation therapies.

9 Addressing patient support gaps can establish a competitive advantage.

There is a growing need to address gaps in patient support to establish a competitive advantage. The industry is moving into a new age where specialty drug prices will grow much more slowly. As that happens, the level of price competition will become greater, and differentiation will be sought through other mechanisms.

10 Patient visibility post-prescription is a challenge for pharma.

Identifying solution providers that can gain access to patients in a multi-channel model, integrating across HUB, SP, EHR and other portals, will allow pharma companies to be more successful in broadening the reach of their support to realize more out of their patient services investment, and to have better visibility with their patient population.

