

Patient Engagement – A Force-Multiplier Essential in the New Standard of Care

How Specialty Therapies
are Effectively Integrating
HUB, SP, and Patient
Engagement Services



Innovative pharma companies continue to add patient engagement providers to the support ecosystem as they offer specialized expertise and focus, access to innovative technologies, a holistic approach, collaboration benefits, and advanced data analytics.

As patient-centricity, innovative solutions, the pursuit of improved patient outcomes, and enhanced treatment experiences intensify, it becomes increasingly evident the convergence of these elements is not just advantageous, but essential for delivering a new standard of care. In this era of interconnectedness, where technology reigns supreme and patient empowerment is pivotal, the synergy achieved through this integration has the potential to reshape the way pharmaceutical patient engagement programs operate, ensuring that each patient's journey is marked by personalized care, proactive support, and optimal therapeutic outcomes.

Rising Patient Barriers to Starting and Staying on Therapy

The first key driver of pharma reshaping and increasing its investment in patient engagement is the continued rise of barriers patients face to start and stay on therapies beyond just access and affordability, which are generally addressed by the company’s HUB and specialty pharmacy provider. The specific impact of each barrier and the magnitude of its impact vary based on disease state, product type, patient population, and other factors, but patient challenges are ample beyond just how they will afford their medication and access it in a convenient way. Examples include:



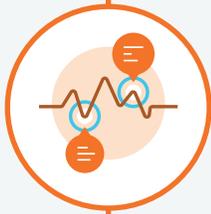
Lack of awareness and education

Patients might not fully understand their condition, the importance of the prescribed medication, or the potential benefits. This lack of awareness can lead to reluctance in starting or misunderstanding treatment. Regardless of awareness and education, regimens that conflict with a patient’s daily routine, work schedule, or cultural practices can lead to nonadherence.



Complex medication regimens

These may involve multiple doses, various medications, non-oral administrations, or specific timing requirements, and they may be a challenge for patients to manage. Beyond the regimen challenges, difficulties in navigating all the steps in the disease management process, logistical barriers beyond treatment—including doctor visits, diagnostic tests—and other complicating factors.



The fear of side effects or adverse reactions

This fear can be heightened by online information, anecdotal stories, or previous negative experiences. Even when patients manage their regimen and side effects, if they do not experience immediate improvement, they might perceive the medication as ineffective and discontinue treatment.



Psychological and emotional barriers

Patients with mental health challenges might find it harder to adhere to medication regimens. Depression, for instance, can sap motivation to care for oneself. In some cases, medications used for certain conditions, such as neurological disorders like Alzheimer’s, might carry a social stigma. Patients might be hesitant to disclose their medication use or may feel embarrassed about needing treatment. The social support patients have around them varies; lack of support from family, friends, or a healthcare provider can contribute to poor outcomes.



Language barriers

Patients for whom English is a second language or have limited health literacy might struggle to understand medication instructions. Cultural beliefs about health and healing can also impact how patients perceive medications.

Evolution of Patient Needs Shapes a New Era in Healthcare

A seismic shift has occurred in the healthcare landscape. Patients are no longer content to simply follow doctor's orders and accept medications without question. Instead, they have become proactive advocates of their own health, seeking more from the pharmaceutical industry than ever before. This compelling transformation is driven by several factors, including increased access to health information, technological advancements, and a growing emphasis on patient-centered care. As patients' needs evolve, their expectations of pharmaceutical support are on the rise.

Patients now have unprecedented access to information through the internet, social media, and patient support groups. Armed with knowledge, they actively participate in their treatment decisions and demand personalized care that aligns with their unique circumstances and preferences.

When seeking support, they are looking for a holistic approach that goes beyond their medication that addresses their physical, emotional, and social well-being. They desire comprehensive patient support that not only helps to manage their conditions but also focuses on prevention, lifestyle changes, and mental health support.

And, in an era defined by technology, patients expect seamless integration of digital health tools into their

A survey by the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA) found that:

83% of patients expect pharma companies to provide support

74% of patients believe that pharma companies have a responsibility to provide support

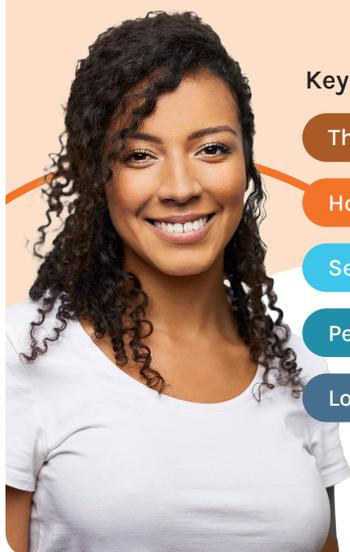
treatment journeys. Mobile apps, telemedicine, remote monitoring, and virtual consultations are no longer novel concepts; they are now expected components of patient engagement programs.

Probably most important, one-size-fits-all solutions are no longer sufficient. Patients seek personalized treatment plans tailored to their individual needs, genetic profiles, and lifestyle choices. Pharma's call to action is to leverage data analytics and precision medicine to create patient-centric interventions.

Lastly, patients no longer want to be mere customers but seek enduring partnerships with pharmaceutical companies. By fostering long-term relationships, pharma can better understand patients' evolving needs and deliver continuous support.

The evolution of patient needs, and the rising tide of expectations are shaping a new era in healthcare, one that calls for a paradigm shift in the pharmaceutical industry's approach to patient support. Embracing patient-centeredness, harnessing cutting-edge technology, and fostering transparent communication are the pillars on which transformative patient engagement can be built. By aligning with these evolving patient needs, the pharmaceutical industry can create a future where patients are not just recipients but active partners in their own health journeys, and that is what we're seeing happen.

Patient Needs and Expectations Continue to Evolve



Key Trends

The empowered patient

Holistic approach to health

Seamless digital experiences

Personalized treatment plans

Long-term relationships

Pharma is Rapidly Increasing Investment in Patient Engagement

The barriers that patients face when it comes to initiating and maintaining their treatment regimens are on the rise. While cost and access to medications have long been challenges, the complexity of modern healthcare has introduced new hurdles. Patients are navigating intricate treatment plans, grappling with information overload, and facing emotional and psychological barriers that can impact their adherence. These barriers, if left unaddressed, can compromise treatment outcomes and patient well-being.

Furthermore, we are in an era of patient empowerment. Patients are no longer passive recipients of healthcare. They demand to be partners in their health journey. They seek information, personalized care, and take an active role in treatment decisions. This shift in patient dynamics is transforming the healthcare landscape, requiring a paradigm shift in how pharmaceutical companies approach patient care and support.

In the face of all of this, the pharmaceutical industry is taking swift and decisive action. Recognizing the pivotal role of patient engagement, pharma companies around the world are now on a mission to rapidly increase their investment in this area, with an expected 17.7% compound annual growth rate through 2030.

In embracing the transformative potential of patient engagement, the pharmaceutical industry is taking giant strides toward a future where healthcare is truly patient-driven, compassionate, and effective. And this increased investment has created a new model of what patient support look like within the specialty therapeutics space.

Patient Engagement Services Play a Critical Role

Biopharma companies are now combining three core pillars of services for patient support: HUB services, patient engagement, and specialty pharmacy (SP) services. These services work together to provide comprehensive and effective support. Each of these components has a specific role in ensuring patients receive the necessary education, resources, medication access, and ongoing support that's required.

The Pharmaceutical Industry is Investing Heavily in Patient Engagement



Source: Grand View Research

HUB services act as the logistical backbone, ensuring that patients gain access to medications swiftly and efficiently. They navigate the complex landscape of insurance and reimbursement, eliminating barriers that could otherwise hinder patients' therapy. Additionally, SP services deliver expert dispensing services, monitoring patients' needs and ensuring they get access to their medications. Their roles are indispensable and vital in ensuring that patients receive the right treatment at the right time.

Enter patient engagement services: an addition that takes this journey to a whole new dimension. This service works to connect patients with personalized education, empowering them to understand their conditions and therapies. Expert professionals such as Clinical Nurse Educators and Nurse Navigators provide emotional support, acting as a guiding light through the often-daunting healthcare ecosystem. They motivate behavioral change, encouraging patients to adhere to their treatment plans with renewed commitment. They create open lines of communication, ensuring that patients are heard, questions are answered, and concerns are addressed.

Patient engagement services bring HUB and SP services into harmony. They connect these essential components and ensure that patients not only receive the right medications but also comprehend their significance. Patient engagement services transform medication regimens into journeys of empowerment where patients take charge of their health.

The combination of patient engagement services, HUB services, and SP services forms a holistic approach that amplifies impact. It's a symphony of seamless logistics, expert clinical care, and patient empowerment. It's about recognizing that patients are not just recipients of medications; they're active participants in their health journey.

Patient Engagement Services Address Gaps in HUB and SP Only Support Model

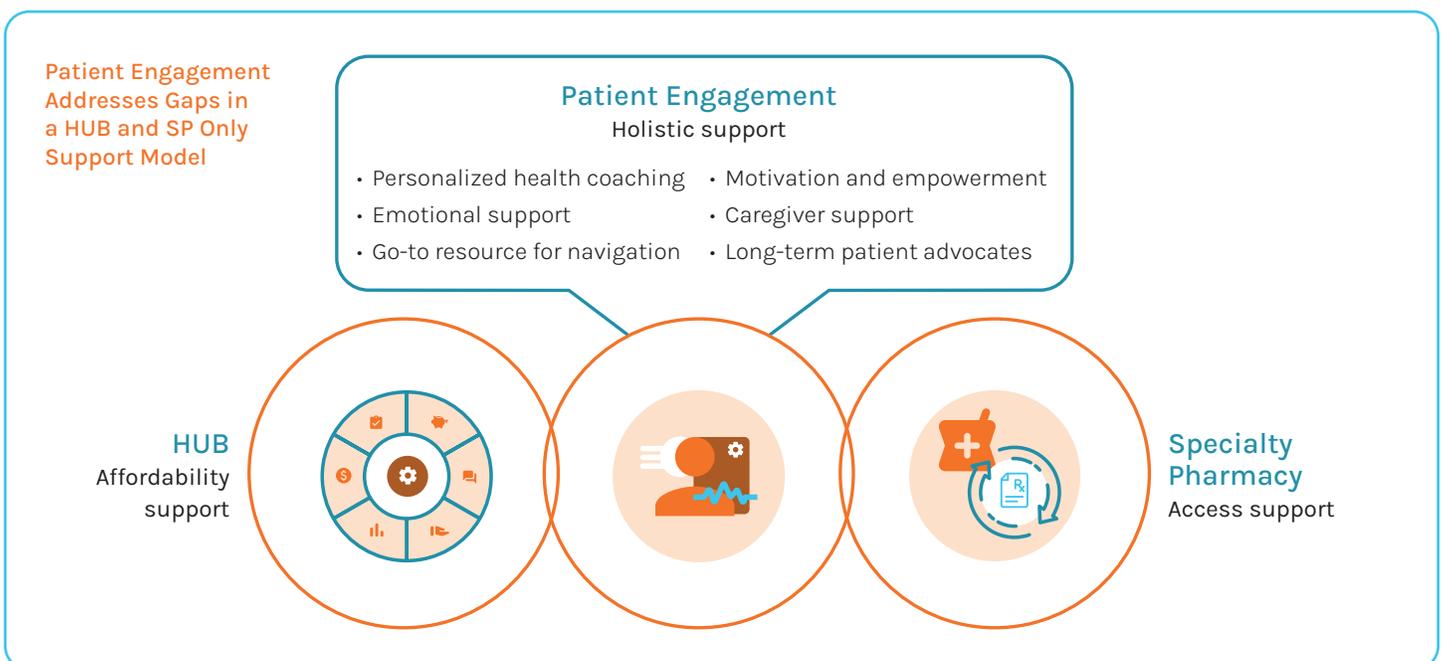
Patient engagement services complement HUB and SP programs by addressing the psychological, emotional, educational, and behavioral aspects of patient care that otherwise would go unaddressed. This intentional focus on empowering patients to make informed decisions, adhere to treatment plans, and improve their overall well-being while navigating the challenges of living with a chronic condition or undergoing complex therapies has become a critical part of patient support for many therapies.

Patient engagement provides tailored coaching to each patient based on their needs, preferences, and circumstances. This coaching ensures that patients have the knowledge needed for therapy and what to expect. This is meant to assist patients toward a successful start on treatment, inclusive of understanding the importance of their treatment in managing their disease and how they

will be able to afford and gain access to their medication. In addition to increasing knowledge, the coaching from patient engagement services encourages positive behavioral changes both immediate and sustained by increasing confidence in taking medication as initially prescribed and on an ongoing basis.

Patient engagement services bring a holistic view of patient well-being, considering not only the clinical needs described earlier, but also the emotional, social and lifestyle factors. Coping with a chronic condition or a complex treatment regimen is emotionally challenging. Patient engagement providers offer emotional support, address patients' fears and anxieties, and supply resources to help them manage the emotional impact of their condition.

Patient engagement services also establish a line of communication for the patient and a go-to resource to help them throughout all stages of therapy. This resource acts as a champion for the patient, helping them navigate the healthcare system and various pharma-provided support programs. It helps patients communicate effectively with healthcare providers. What used to be a disjointed journey with multiple constituents reaching out to the patient quickly becomes streamlined by providing patients with a go-to person. This individual can help to connect the patient to local, regional, and national resources.



Rather than being passive in their healthcare experience, patient engagement services ensure that patients are motivated to take an active role in their health management. They encourage patients to set and achieve health-related goals, working to celebrate the small and large milestones along the way. To achieve full empowerment, these services leverage self-serve tools and resources that help patients take accountability of managing aspects of therapy regimen on their own.

Caregivers play a pivotal role in a patient’s journey, yet their needs are often overlooked. Patient engagement services extend their support to caregivers, offering resources, guidance, and a listening ear. This holistic approach recognizes that caregivers are integral to patient well-being and ensures they are equipped to provide the best care possible.

Patient engagement services ensure support is ongoing. The services help patients adapt to changes in their condition, treatment, or circumstances over time. Maintaining this relationship with patients can be critical to creating advocates and building a strong feedback loop back to providers of the level and type of support that is being provided.

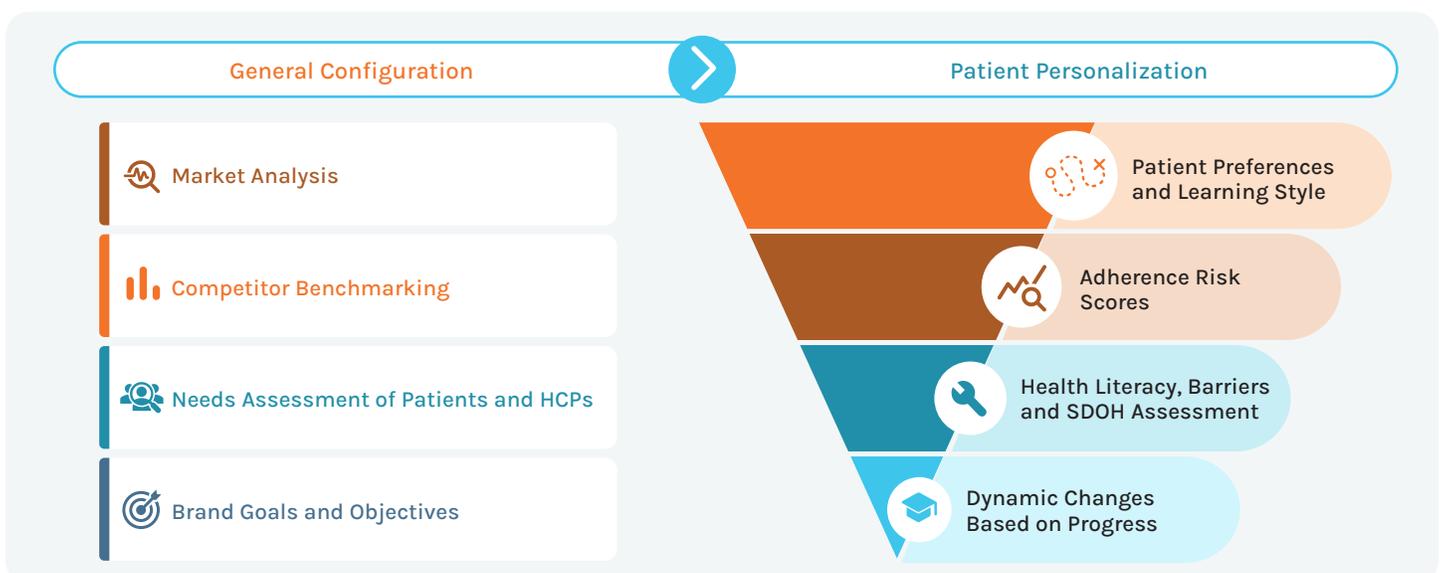
By combining these three core services into one holistic support model: patient engagement, HUB and SP support, pharma can address significant gaps in support and differentiate between what good patient engagement services look like and what great patient engagement services look like.

Design and Approach for Great Patient Engagement

Specific to design and approach, what differentiates good from great patient engagement is a partner that follows an intricate process in developing the patient journey. Great patient engagement service providers recognize that every brand is unique in support needs, just as each patient is unique. The support experience should reflect that.

First, the general configuration of a patient’s journey is tailored to the nuances of the product type, disease state, patient population and other key factors. The work begins with comprehensive market analysis and competitor benchmarking. This entails understanding the landscape, identifying gaps, and assessing what sets your product and patient support apart. By learning from successful strategies and identifying areas for improvement, patient engagement services position themselves to deliver exceptional value.

A thorough needs assessment process uncovers what patients require, ensuring that the support journey addresses pain points, challenges, and aspirations. Learning from past experiences is invaluable. What worked, what didn’t, and why? This retrospective analysis ensures that the journey is not only innovative but also grounded in practical knowledge. The final input is brand goals and objectives. The general configuration of the journey must connect back to the business KPIs that the company is aiming to drive with their investment.



Great Patient Engagement Benefits Patients and Pharma

PATIENTS

PHARMA



Once the general configuration is established, layering on personalization has become a core component of leading patient engagement programs. This includes capturing patient preferences and understanding learning styles to deliver support in a way that's most preferred by the patient. Monitoring adherence risk scores allows adjustment of the level and type of support that is provided. Finally, it's crucial to gain insight on specific patient challenges that need to be addressed through health literacy. Patient journeys are fluid, and so is their progress. As patients achieve milestones, overcome barriers, or face new challenges, leading patient engagement services are equipped to adapt dynamically based on patient progress.

Great Patient Engagement Benefits Patients and Pharma

Great patient engagement matters because it transforms lives. It is a catalyst for improved clinical outcomes. Personalized support and tools to manage health have been shown to make patients more likely to start and adhere to therapies, leading to better disease management, fewer complications, and enhanced clinical results.

It also helps to reduce day-to-day burden and challenges. Living with a medical condition can be overwhelming. Great patient engagement programs alleviate this burden by offering practical solutions that increase quality of life.

Effective engagement shifts patients from being passive to active. A sense of empowerment instills confidence and fosters a positive outlook that goes beyond disease management. Patients feel as if they have a voice and are in control of this part of their journey.

Health isn't just physical; it's also mental. Great patient engagement recognizes this and offers holistic support. Patients facing health challenges often grapple with stress, anxiety, and uncertainty. Engaging patients on an emotional level through information, emotional support, and shared experiences can significantly improve mental well-being.

For biopharma, great patient engagement creates a positive ripple effect that starts by increased differentiation and the establishment of a competitive advantage. In an industry marked by fierce competition, biopharmaceutical companies must go beyond their products to stand out. Great patient engagement becomes the differentiator that sets companies apart.

Companies showcase a commitment to comprehensive patient well-being by offering personalized support, education, and assistance. At the same time, this investment improves business performance. Through increased adherence and reduced treatment abandonment rates, biopharmaceutical companies witness a boost in revenue.

These patient engagement programs can resonate with healthcare providers, payers, and other key healthcare stakeholders. This improved market perception fosters collaboration, builds trust, and positions companies as partners in the journey. Great patient engagement also takes the burden off healthcare professionals by providing patients with the information, resources, and support they need. This not only enhances patient outcomes but also frees up HCPs to focus on higher-level patient care.

Last, patient engagement programs generate a wealth of data and insights. By analyzing patient behaviors, preferences, and challenges, biopharmaceutical companies gain a deeper understanding to inform strategic decisions, guide product development, and refine patient support strategies.

Advantages of Partnering

There are several advantages to partnering with a company that specializes in patient engagement. It is what they do, so they have expertise and experience that may not be available within a pharma company. There is a track record to evaluate for both overall success and improving factors of patient support. These providers

are already focused on serving individual patients and meeting their needs. Further, they have already developed tools to provide insight into patient behavior to anticipate needed interactions to make the patient's journey a fulfilling experience.



First and foremost, patient engagement is their core competency. These companies specialize in understanding patient behaviors, needs, and motivations. Their expertise lies in designing interventions that empower patients, fostering active participation in their healthcare journey.



The second compelling reason to partner is their proven impact. They have a track record of improving patient adherence, outcomes, and satisfaction. Their methods have been tested, refined, and have demonstrated tangible results in real-world scenarios.



Patient engagement-focused companies bring efficient models to the table. Their strategies are laser-focused, ensuring that every intervention counts. They understand the intricacies of patient interaction, optimizing every touchpoint to achieve meaningful outcomes without unnecessary resource drain.



Partnering with these companies allows other partners in the ecosystem to concentrate on their strengths. HUB services and SP providers can channel their energies into ensuring seamless logistics, quick access to medications, and streamlined operations, while patient engagement experts take care of building lasting patient relationships.



Patient engagement-focused companies are at the forefront of integrating innovative technology, behavioral insights, and personalized experiences. Their solutions evolve with the rapidly changing healthcare landscape, bringing novel approaches that captivate patients and keep them engaged.

Partnering with patient engagement-focused companies isn't just about adding another layer to an existing patient support service. It's about tapping into expertise, results, efficiency, innovation, and collaboration.

It's about elevating impact by recognizing that active, engaged patients are at the heart of creating a healthcare journey that's not just prescribed, but personalized and empowering.

Critical Success Factors

The addition of a third partner to the mix increases complexity; however, the advantages outweigh these challenges and there are some critical program elements that ensure optimal collaboration and coordination between the Patient Engagement Provider, SP and HUB.

Central to success is designating a single, reliable point of contact for patients. Many patient engagement programs leverage a dedicated individual working for the patient. This person becomes the patient's advocate, offering personalized support and guidance throughout their healthcare journey. The primary-point-of-contact model ensures continuity, builds trust, and empowers patients by providing consistent, tailored assistance.

To ensure proper data sharing such that each party can have a comprehensive view of each patient's needs and progress, two-way API integrations enable real-time sharing of patient data between patient engagement, HUB, and SP services. This integration ensures that everyone involved is on the same page, reducing redundancies, enhancing coordination, and offering a holistic view of the patient's needs and progress.

The patient's go-to resource, such as a Clinical Nurse Educator or Nurse Navigator, is often part of the patient engagement company, and a warm transfer mechanism connects patients seamlessly from the primary point of contact to specialized HUB and SP services when needed. This transition maintains the personal touch while ensuring that patients receive the specialized support they require. It's about making sure patients never feel lost in the system and always receive the right level of assistance.

Last, effective communication isn't just about sharing data; it's about actively learning and improving. A feedback loop from the patient engagement provider back to the HUB and SP services is crucial. Insights from the frontline—gathered from patient interactions—offer valuable feedback that informs and enhances the effectiveness of these services, fostering continuous improvement.

By combining the strengths of patient engagement providers, HUBs, and specialty pharmacies, pharmaceutical patient engagement programs can offer a well-rounded, patient-centered approach that addresses various aspects of patients' needs for successful treatment experiences in a highly cohesive and coordinated way.



Effective Patient Engagement Reduces First Prescription Abandonment

In addition to substantiating the quantitative impact, it's helpful to understand the main ways a patient engagement program reduces abandonment. While there may be many factors, meaningful differences include:



The immediate connection

Based on the solution design, the patient's primary support resource should be able to proactively reach out within hours of the patient being prescribed medication. This requires capturing appropriate consent and patient contact information, while also transferring data via application programming interfaces (APIs). This setup ensures there is limited time a patient has between their healthcare provider visit and meeting the individual who will be their go-to resource throughout the treatment regimen.



Addressing non-financial barriers

One of the biggest drivers of abandonment of script is cost, however an effective HUB program can help. A patient engagement program that is designed to address clinical, logistical, and emotional barriers early on sets expectations, provides required knowledge, and increases the patient's confidence they are making the right decision in starting the regimen, and will have the resources they need to succeed.



Live triage support

Ensuring that the support personnel who are at the frontlines with patients have access to the full view of the patient's profile and understand their ability to afford and access their medication can be critical to ensuring that transparency is being provided to the patient. If issues arise, appropriate triage is done to make the patient feel supported and not "handed-off" between patient support providers.

Effective Patient Engagement Increases Persistency

One of the biggest drivers for increased persistency is delivering a personalized journey. Programs that utilize an approach that is not one-size fits all demonstrate improved adherence by being more relevant to patients' lives and health conditions. This relevancy makes patients feel the support program is designed for them, leading to higher engagement and adherence. A personalized journey embraces a patient-centered approach where patients' needs and preferences are central to the care plan. This approach cultivates a sense of partnership between patients and the pharma industry. It fosters a sense of trust and rapport where patients feel their needs are understood and valued, encouraging them to adhere to treatment recommendations.

With the evolution of personalized patient engagement, it was quickly realized that upfront personalization of the patient support journey wasn't enough. A patient's adherence risk, needs, behaviors, etc. change, evolve, and even ebb and flow throughout their time on therapy. Given that things aren't static, to maximize the impact of patient engagement support not only must be personalized, but also dynamic on an ongoing basis. It must shape itself to what is best suited for that specific patient. For example, if a patient progresses through their support journey quicker than anticipated and they are comfortable managing their therapy, it makes sense to change the type of connection planned, and shift it towards a more automated, self-serve type of support. Or if a patient's activity levels on their Apple Watch changes drastically from their baseline levels, it's likely a signal there is a change in status of the patient and a need for support, which even if there is a planned interaction, doing an ad-hoc intervention would make good sense.

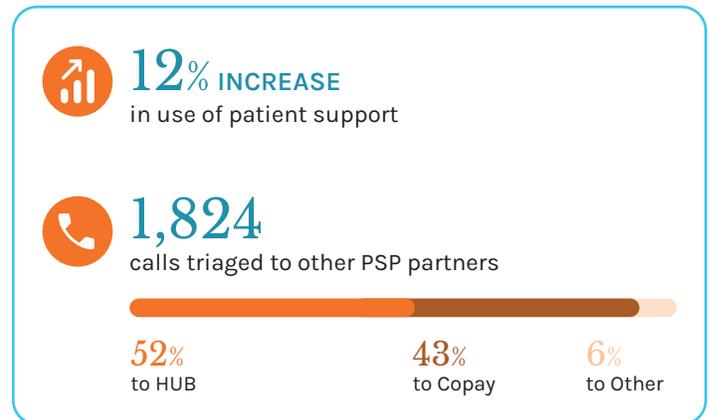
The use of a primary-point-of-contact model is an effective one. To streamline the patient's experience, many companies have leveraged this versus having siloed constituents engage with the patient at different points of time. This primary point of contact often starts to engage around the time of Rx and stays with the patient through the ongoing support and adherence phases of their journey on product.

Pull Through of Patient Engagement Services

Patient engagement is the “1+1 equals more than 3” effect. Essentially, it is a force multiplier with the ability to significantly impact the outcome and reach new heights.

By putting patient engagement partners into the mix of the support, the other services pharma companies invest in can be utilized more effectively and efficiently. For example, in a program where patient engagement support was added, there was a 12% increase in the overall services used by patients across all resources. In that same program, the patient engagement company was able to triage nearly 2,000 calls through warm transfer to help patients overcome specific barriers that could be addressed by the HUB or Copay.

A few of these patient and Clinical Nurse Educator and Nurse Navigator quotes bring to life the role the patient engagement company can play in connecting the dots and creating a more cohesive experience for patients, while enabling all the services being provided in a much more optimal way.



“A patient called upset because he had not heard from anyone about approval nor medication delivery. Using [the Hub portal], I was able to see the patient was approved. I called the SP with the patient on the line, and we arranged the delivery. If the patient hadn’t called me, he’d still be waiting for his medication.”

—Nurse Educator from a patient engagement company

This demonstrates the role and impact a patient engagement company can have on also supporting brand HUB and SP partners.

Addressing Health Inequities

Beyond improved performance, pharma has an opportunity to leverage patient engagement to help address health inequities.

Social determinants of health (SDOH) are increasingly recognized as major contributors to health disparities and poor health outcomes. Nearly half of patients say they feel like the healthcare system “doesn’t care about people like me,” a broad sentiment we see as keeping a wide range of people from engaging regardless of who they are. Within this number, we see respondents of all races, ages, incomes, and health conditions. This sentiment underscores the opportunity to accelerate work on reducing health disparities.

If patient engagement programs can remove barriers and address these factors by considering a patient’s social, economic, and environmental circumstances, major progress is possible. According to a report by

Accenture, increasing holistic support can address social determinants of health (SDOH) and improve health outcomes. The report found that up to 68% of patients said they would be more likely to follow a prescribed care plan if it accounted for their SDOH. Additionally, patients who received personalized support saw an improvement in their SDOH, with 78% reporting a positive impact on their health outcomes.



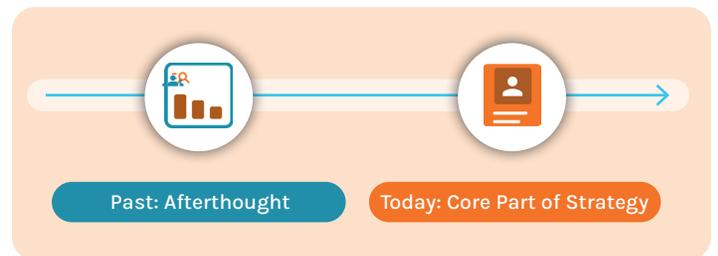
Patient Engagement Can Help Biopharma

Investing in patient engagement can improve engagement and access. Patients who feel that their pharma companies understand and support them are more likely to engage in their treatment plan, leading to better health outcomes. Individualized patient support can help improve patient engagement by supplying tailored education, resources, and support that meet each patient's unique needs and preferences and work to increase access to these types of services. At the same time, it has the potential to address the social determinants by connecting patients with social services, financial assistance, and other resources that address their unique circumstances. This could include addressing cultural barriers, gaps in health literacy and other key areas.

In the rapidly evolving landscape of pharmaceuticals, where breakthrough treatments and innovative therapies are rewriting the rules, a stark truth emerges: the success of any pharmaceutical endeavor hinges on a force too often overlooked, yet incredibly potent: the power of patient engagement. Gone are the days when patient engagement could be tacked onto existing HUB or SP services as mere afterthoughts, or simply ignored all together.

Today, the line between success and failure blurs at the point of patient interaction, where adherence, empowerment, and outcomes unite. Patient engagement isn't a mere accessory; it's a non-negotiable core element that demands to be woven into the very fabric of commercial strategies. In this new era, it's the alliance of specialized and focused patient engagement, HUB services, and SPs working in unison that holds the keys to the future—where treatment journeys are transformed, patient experiences are revolutionized, and pharmaceutical impact is elevated to unprecedented heights.

Please reach out to VMS BioMarketing with questions and to learn more about how we partner with biopharma clients to reimagine the patient's experience.



About VMS BioMarketing

VMS BioMarketing is the leading provider of patient engagement solutions integrating human connection, advanced technology, and real-world data to deliver holistic support in a dynamic and personalized environment. Leveraging 25+ years of experience in patient engagement, we know consumers want to build and develop relationships with the pharma companies whose products they utilize, and the research shows these relationships are vital to achieving the right health outcomes for patients and business outcomes for clients. Our innovative and award-winning platform, One Voice™, can empower your brand teams to build authentic relationships with patients by uniquely combining data-driven technology and human interventions using our proprietary, intelligent algorithm to determine the right level of support for each patient based on disease state, product type, adherence risk profile, social determinants of health, real-world evidence, demographics, and psychographics to optimize the right mix of human and technology-driven interventions.

Visit us at vmsbiomarketing.com.

