



LEADERSHIP PERSPECTIVES

DEVELOPING A CROSS-SECTOR CAREER

Installment #9 of a multi-part series



JOHN PRACYK, MD, PHD, MBA

In the Perspectives series, MAPS Americas Region President, **John Pracyk, MD, PhD, MBA** speaks with leaders from Johnson & Johnson, where John is Integrated Leader, Medical Affairs, Preclinical and Clinical Research at DePuy Synthes Spine (a J&J company). Rather than publishing each interview separately, John has chosen to organize these interviews by topic, distilling the opinions of J&J thought leaders to demonstrate consensus or offer distinct viewpoints on issues of importance for the practice of Medical Affairs.

We previously explored transitioning between therapeutic areas and here, building on that theme, we are going to explore a bolder vision of career development that entails moving across sectors; namely, crossing over between Pharmaceuticals, Medical Devices, Vision, and Consumer Health.

In fact, this movement between sectors has proven to be a favorite topic here at MAPS, covered in Elevate articles, annual meeting workshops, and even podcasts. Why is this the case? In large part, it is because the boundaries are blurring between sectors as a more comprehensive view of both diagnostics and multi-modality therapeutics begin to coalesce to better mirror the patient's journey through the disease process.

In this installment, we will be examining how some of the top Medical Affairs leaders from Johnson & Johnson think about career development across the different sectors.

Question: Can a Medical Affairs career develop across Pharma, MedTech, Life Sciences and Consumer Health sectors?





Jennifer Davidson, DO

Vice President, Medical Affairs, Cardiovascular, Metabolism, & Retina, Janssen, J&J

- I think this is a particularly opportune time to open that cross-sector door for change and to encourage diversity of different educations, trainings, professional disciplines, to be accepted into the Pharmaceutical industry or the MedTech industry and vice versa.
- As the world's largest healthcare company, developing an enterprise mindset is encouraged here at Johnson & Johnson. As it has been more established on the commercial side, it only makes sense to now begin to consider connecting the main sectors (Pharmaceuticals, Medical Devices, Vision, and Consumer Health) with Medical Affairs cross pollination. It just showcases all that we have under the J&J umbrella, and it is an amazing opportunity for us to lead with true thought leadership in this space.
- It will be very interesting to watch how these sectors come together to deliver against a disease challenge and what new niche therapeutic spaces and new treatment modalities begin to emerge from this type of innovative thinking.





Paul Burton, MD, PhD

Vice President, Chief Global Medical Affairs Officer, Janssen, J&J

- In my own career within Pharmaceuticals, I have held roles in Research & Development, Operations, and now Medical Affairs. So, it is easier and more commonplace to make those transitions across functional roles within a single sector.
- However, to transition across sectors, it takes a highly motivated individual, a diverse skill set, and a significant amount of learning agility.
- I don't think you can "dip in, hop around, and then hit the exit". Instead, I think you need to be prepared to take some time, be purposefully thorough, and create meaningful connections to comprehensively understand how that business sector works.
- An early career internship or cross sector stretch assignment or project may be the perfect initial opportunity to learn and contribute in a consequential way.
- Today, I think there is a particular benefit in navigating from Pharmaceuticals towards Medical Devices.
 - For example, in Oncology there are already drug-device combination therapies and I think we will be seeing more of these. It's critically important to understand the unique regulatory pathways and whether it will be primarily a drug or a device. It makes a huge difference, particularly in looking at time to market considerations.
 - The time course to development is much shorter on the device side, as quick as 18—24 months in some circumstances.





Rajesh Mishra, MD, PhD

Vice President, Global Medical & Clinical Sciences, Consumer Health, J&J

- Transitioning across sectors is certainly a realistic career option these days because the fundamental skills and competencies of Medical Affairs are innately transferable.
- If an individual is willing to learn and apply themselves to a new sector, then it becomes a new career development opportunity.
- We are all scientific leaders of some sort because we have been trained to be analytical thinkers. Diving in deep and mastering a new area quickly is inherently second nature to many of us.
- It's been said that the shelf life of any degree is no more than five years. I would propose, Medical Affairs should not be any different as career rejuvenation is required for continued professional growth.





Rajesh Rajpal, MD

VP, Chief Medical Officer, Global Head of Clinical & Medical Affairs, Vision, J&J

▣ The vision care business is somewhat unique in that it already has cross sector diversity built right in; namely, Ophthalmology, Optometry, and the consumer contact lens business.

▣ This shows that a cross sector opportunity may be much closer than you think.





Tony Hong, MBA

VP, Integrated Leader, Preclinical & Clinical Research and Medical Affairs, Cardiovascular & Specialty Solutions, J&J

■ I think it's entirely possible to cross sectors here in Johnson & Johnson because it is such a large company and we have common processes, that make it easy to accomplish a transition.

■ We can and should leverage that commonality between the sectors and want to determine cross sector effectiveness; namely, "How does my pharmaceutical Medical Affairs background now apply here in Medical Devices?"





Mark Wildgust, PhD

VP, Global Medical Affairs, Oncology, Janssen, J&J

- The cross-sector career development proposition is a very interesting one. I would approach it by talking to my colleagues from different sectors of the industry first looking for an understanding of the commonalities and then distilling it down the key success factors.
- In looking into Medical Devices, you may find yourself saying, “Wow, it’s the same approach as Pharmaceuticals, but entirely different challenges and expected outcomes”.
- Alternatively, the idea of working in small biotech firm is super exciting. Like any small company, be prepared to literally be doing everything yourself. As the sole contributor you may find yourself spread across many functions such as Medical, Clinical, Regulatory, Safety, and Market Access.
- Just think about the experience that you would gain from such an all-encompassing experience. It could be a career value multiplier of an entirely different magnitude.

