



The Value of Medical Information to Internal Stakeholders

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ABSTRACT

Medical Information (MedInfo) Teams provide a vital function for the business, serving as a key resource for both internal and external customers. MedInfo Teams are scientific thought-partners internally and a reliable generator of valuable insights. MedInfo's unique view into customers' needs and partnership with internal stakeholders allows filling of data gaps and clarifying of published information. An analysis of data trends of MedInfo inquiries and acting upon the findings are impactful contributions of MedInfo Teams. Additionally, MedInfo Teams bring product knowledge and expertise to Promotional/Medical Review Teams and Product Launch Teams. In a global organization, enhanced efficiency is observed in new markets with existing knowledge of customer needs that can be leveraged. MedInfo Teams contribute to the business with clinical expertise, extensive knowledge of the company products and medical literature, insights of customer needs, and a strong understanding of the business.

INTRODUCTION

Medical Information (MedInfo) Teams provide scientific, therapeutic, and product expertise to support healthcare professionals (HCPs), patients, and payers in making informed patient care decisions.¹ In addition to the services provided to external customers, MedInfo Teams bring value to internal business partners, and ultimately to the business. MedInfo Teams work with internal partners in a variety of ways; however, these contributions may not be widely recognized. Awareness of the value that MedInfo Teams can deliver to internal partners can ensure that each organization is able to leverage this expertise and receive maximum benefit from the resources within their company. This paper will summarize experiences from phactMI™ (Pharma Collaboration for Transparent Medical Information) members relating to the value that MedInfo brings to their companies. phactMI™ is a consortium of pharmaceutical companies' MedInfo Teams dedicated to supporting HCPs in their commitment to provide quality patient care.²

BACKGROUND

MedInfo Teams are steeped in scientific expertise staffed with members who have healthcare degrees, typically PharmD's.^{1,3} The combination of in-depth scientific knowledge, product expertise, and mastery of medical literature makes MedInfo Scientists ideal colleagues to bring value to the organization and support HCP decision making. Add to this an intuitive understanding of customer needs and the ability to identify insights from external customers, and you have a recipe for success.

When MedInfo Scientists receive questions from HCPs or patients, they utilize their vast knowledge, databases of scientific summaries, and the medical literature to respond.^{1,3} However, this is not enough. The keen understanding of the organizational structure and the ability to navigate its complexities become paramount. MedInfo Scientists must plot a course through internal networks to identify colleagues within the organization who can provide or confirm the lack of information. Calls may be triaged to pharmacovigilance or product complaint departments for support. Alternatively, MedInfo Scientists may consult with internal Clinical/Medical Teams for data that are not readily available but required to respond to the customer in an efficient, effective, and unbiased manner.

Beyond inquiry management, MedInfo Teams contribute to the business in various ways which are vital to the success of the appropriate use of company products. MedInfo collaborates daily with business partners, including Medical Affairs Teams, Development Clinical Research Teams, Customer and Patient Support Program Coordinators, Commercial Business Planning Teams, Launch Planning Teams, Medical Education, Health Outcomes, and others.¹

IMPACT

MedInfo has a large impact on internal stakeholders and the business who rely on MedInfo Team's insights to fill data gaps, clarify key product messages, and support safe and effective use of medicines. MedInfo has different roles and responsibilities in their respective companies; however, these are some of the MedInfo roles that are more consistent across organizations.

MedInfo Insights:

MedInfo supports customers in making informed care and treatment decisions with a goal of being a trusted resource which builds goodwill and company credibility. MedInfo is uniquely positioned to learn and understand external consumers by having direct knowledge of product-related scientific needs of HCPs and consumers who have previously contacted them.^{1,3,4,5}

It is the connection with external customers that puts MedInfo in the ideal position to identify customer insights. MedInfo provides detailed metric reports and insights on the volume and type of interactions for each product with customers to internal partners. Some of these metrics include HCP type, question category, usage of scientific response documents, and publications. Layered on top of the metric report is MedInfo's critical analysis of observations, trends, data gaps, and opportunities. These insights are valuable resources sourced directly from the HCPs and consumers; and can fill data gaps, clarify messages, and support safe and effective use of medicines. MedInfo insights may lead to evidence generating activity when knowledge gaps are identified. (See Table 1 for examples)

MedInfo knowledge of customer information needs are communicated internally via cross-functional discussion forums impacting strategy (i.e., medical plans, life-cycle planning, and revenue-driving activities). The insights and customer stories are shared to initiate change at product, portfolio, and process levels. This can lead to opportunities for product improvement, data generation, actionable insights, education, improved customer experience, and development of patient focused content.⁶

Globalization

Globalization efforts allow for the alignment of MedInfo scientific content globally including scientific response documents adaptable for local use.⁵ Global customer insights generated by global medical information (GMI) help to inform preparation for local launches and inquiry trends. The insights gained via direct patient/HCP access gives MedInfo the opportunity to streamline resources for the local markets. Often, smaller affiliate MedInfo Teams are staffed with fewer specialists with limited access to information on new products. Sharing of developed launch materials and other core documents eliminates recreating the wheel and ensures consistent product information globally.⁴ The value of identifying trends at the local/global level and sharing actionable insights is immeasurable.

Medical Review

Another role MedInfo provides is medical review for promotional and medical materials used by field teams.¹ As reviewers and/or approver of field materials, MedInfo brings scientific expertise and mastery of relevant literature to the table. MedInfo reviews material for scientific accuracy, relevancy, and appropriate scientific context. In addition, they ensure that materials are consistent with product labels and MedInfo scientific response documents in terms of references and data sources. In turn, MedInfo benefits from this role via enhanced understanding of the business which allows for a more informed and connected medical team.

Launch

MedInfo is involved in strategic planning for product launch and is integral to launch planning and readiness.^{1,4,7} MedInfo serves as an initial touchpoint and can assist with rapid interventions and resolutions to provide key wins at launch. Questions received from external customers usually begin months before product approval, and a well-informed MedInfo Team may better respond to questions. MedInfo often collaborates with colleagues in Medical Affairs, Clinical Development, and others to predict topics of interest and ensure preparedness of appropriate responses. MedInfo also contributes to launch preparedness by sharing product- and process-expertise in training field sales, medical teams, and MedInfo contact center agents,¹ ensuring consistency of knowledge and familiarity of resources available in the scientific response document database. MedInfo may review customer trends from previous approvals of products in similar categories or therapeutics to predict anticipated question types and volume. Based on anticipated volume, additional staff or writing support may be needed. Providing feedback regarding inquiry volume and the types of questions received by the Commercial Team also helps the Launch Team maintain a sense of what is happening in the field.⁴ (see Table 1)

Congress

In support of medical congresses, MedInfo Teams address questions from attendees seeking product information, which may enhance the relationship between HCPs and the pharmaceutical company. For each congress, MedInfo works with the planning team to become familiar with the data that will be presented and to update respective scientific response documents. On site or virtually, MedInfo responds to unsolicited requests via discussions with HCPs and sharing of medical data.

Market Access

MedInfo may help patients obtain access to therapy by assisting with the development of dossiers and managing requests for dossiers from healthcare organizations and payors. MedInfo Teams support product acceptability through submission of clinical data to drug compendia and treatment guidelines, and development of Academy of Managed Care Pharmacy (AMCP) dossiers.^{1,4} MedInfo teams may have various roles in support of the AMCP dossier from creation and maintenance, including coordination with internal departments, to reviewing or disseminating the dossier upon request.

Communicating MedInfo Value Internally

Some MedInfo Teams may struggle to demonstrate their value to the business. It may not be obvious to internal partners that MedInfo is far more than a cost center for the business. To improve patient experiences and outcomes, the wealth of interactions and data MedInfo Teams collect should be used strategically to generate important insights for Medical Affairs Teams and the entire organization. MedInfo should be a key partner in shaping the thinking around patient journeys, potential difficulties with drug application, or uncovering additional indications for clinical trials, to name a few areas of contribution. It is critical that MedInfo leadership strategically prioritizes showcasing the capability of this function and communicate the value of their function internally. Some of the areas in which MedInfo delivers value and which may be communicated internally are summarized in Table 2.⁹ If done right, communicating the value of the MedInfo function will allow the team to be a true scientific thought-partner internally, and a reliable generator of insights for global stakeholders.

CONCLUSION

MedInfo Teams contribute in various ways to the business when working with internal business partners. MedInfo Teams have clinical expertise, extensive knowledge of the product and literature, insights of customer needs, and a strong understanding of the business. These traits enable MedInfo Teams to provide value to both external and internal customers.

Table 1. Examples of Activities and Impact

FUNCTION	IMPACT
Insights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions relating to specific adverse events lead the Pharmacovigilance Team to publish management details. • Questions on onset and duration of adverse events resulted in inclusion of these data points in future clinical study protocols. • An increased number of inquiries and complaints concerning a high amount of residual gel administered via a vaginal applicator were received. Although this was expected due to overfill, which guaranteed delivery of the required dose; it resulted in a loss of patient confidence. Similarly, the Commercial Team noticed an unexplained decline in the sales as a high number of patients were being switched to the competitor. Due to the MedInfo insights flagged to Medical and Commercial leadership, the internal teams were now aware of a possible root cause of the issue and worked together to design an alternate device which addressed the perception of incomplete administration of the drug. Eventually, patient confidence was restored.
Globalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An analysis of customer data sets from the global MedInfo call centers, field Medical Team interactions, unsolicited questions at advisory boards, congresses, and speaker trainings, and other ad hoc data sets, provided insights into the inquiries the company received through a variety of channels. The needs and gaps lead to the creation of new scientific responses documents.
Launch activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After a high volume of inquiries were received at launch concerning obtaining the full dose of parenteral medication from a vial, MedInfo developed guidelines with specific equipment suggestions. Working with the appropriate departments to gather and convey the necessary information ensured that customer needs were met.

Table 2. Examples of Communicating the Value of MedInfo Teams across the Organization [8]

AUDIENCE	ACTIVITY
All employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host interactive lunch & learns to expose employees to MedInfo offerings and capabilities • Create a brief MedInfo “Road Show” that can be utilized with other company stakeholders upon meeting with them 1:1 for the first time. • Develop an internal MedInfo page providing visibility into MedInfo activities • Communicate value stories demonstrating impact to business • Act as internal medical advisor on company products and proactively offer support • Provide product overview as part of new employee onboarding
Commercial (in addition to the above)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve as the voice of the patient internally • Provide actionable insights from external interactions • Educate to patient and HCP needs • Conduct internal satisfaction surveys and use results to improve internal service offering • Offer training on the scientific background of incoming inquiries • Recognition and Awards via internal partners and collaboration • Host MedInfo booth at national and international events, as appropriate, to demonstrate MedInfo offerings • If appropriate, link external facing MedInfo page to HCP page of commercial websites
Medical (in addition to the above)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share metrics (inquiry volume, volume of scientific response documents, volume of promotional material for review etc.) • Categorize and report off-label inquiries to explore potential new indications • Use MedInfo inquiries to create and share a heat map of trending issues with respect to specific products, geographies, adverse events or product complaints so they can be identified and resolved • Analyze inquiries from HCPs to evaluate whether they are key opinion leaders who can be engaged more broadly by field medical teams • Consider combining field medical and MedInfo insights • Identify, interpret, and act upon insights • Highlight data gaps; influence data generation/publication needs • Track and share medical material usage • Share HCP educational needs with Medical Training and Medical Education; influence medical education programs and development of field material
C-suite & Senior Leadership (in addition to the above)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share MedInfo metrics, external survey results and key performance indicators; highlight resourcing needs • Share success stories with senior management • Educate C-Suite to patient and physician needs

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AUDIENCE	ACTIVITY
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Share adverse events and product complaint information with Safety and Quality Teams• Collaborate with IT to improve digitization and connectivity between various Scientific Communication platforms• Create partnerships with outside peer groups; share best practices which can be leveraged internally• Present at industry conferences; collaborate within industry; establish team expertise within peers externally; co-author manuscripts and share internally• Share best practices regionally and globally

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