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## Advancing HCP Education Through Innovative Medical Education Strategies

Insights from Wiley's Annual Global HCP Survey



Serving as a bridge between a company's research and development wing and healthcare professionals (HCPs), Medical Affairs teams face mounting pressure to deliver trusted, credible education to increasingly time-constrained HCPs. Based on Wiley's 2024 Global HCP Survey of 960 HCPs, and in-depth interviews with Medical Affairs leaders, this whitepaper reveals:

74% of HCPs cite medical journals as their most frequently accessed source of clinical information, indicating a strong preference for peer-reviewed, evidence-based publications.

This aligns with additional findings that 61% of HCPs rank publishers among their two most trusted sources of medical information, underscoring the vital role of editorial-led content.

This whitepaper highlights the key trends in HCPs' information-seeking preferences, and explores how Medical Affairs professionals can leverage our trusted academic and society information sources, to foster trust and enhance engagement with HCPs.



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# Adapting to Change: Medical Affairs and HCP Education

The pharmaceutical industry today is witnessing a rapid emergence of new treatments and therapies at an unprecedented pace.

- 2024 – 5,400 new drugs under development<sup>1</sup>
- 2028 – Spending on medicines is projected to increase by 12%<sup>2</sup>
- 2029 – The cell and gene therapy market is expected to reach \$80 billion<sup>3</sup>

These changes are driven by a shift in the global disease landscape, rapid advancements in science and technology, a move towards patient-centered care, and the adoption of personalized medicine. In this landscape, it becomes imperative for HCPs to stay up-to-date with the latest medical advancements for informed decision-making and steering positive treatment outcomes.<sup>4</sup>

We conducted our annual global HCP survey to understand their information-seeking behavior and the factors that drive their content choices. In collaboration with EMI, a provider of HCP contacts, surveys were emailed to 353,000 HCPs, yielding 1,141 responses, of which 960 were completed in full. Additionally, we conducted interviews with four Medical Affairs professionals, with excerpts included in this report to complement the quantitative findings.

## A Closer Look at Our Survey Respondents

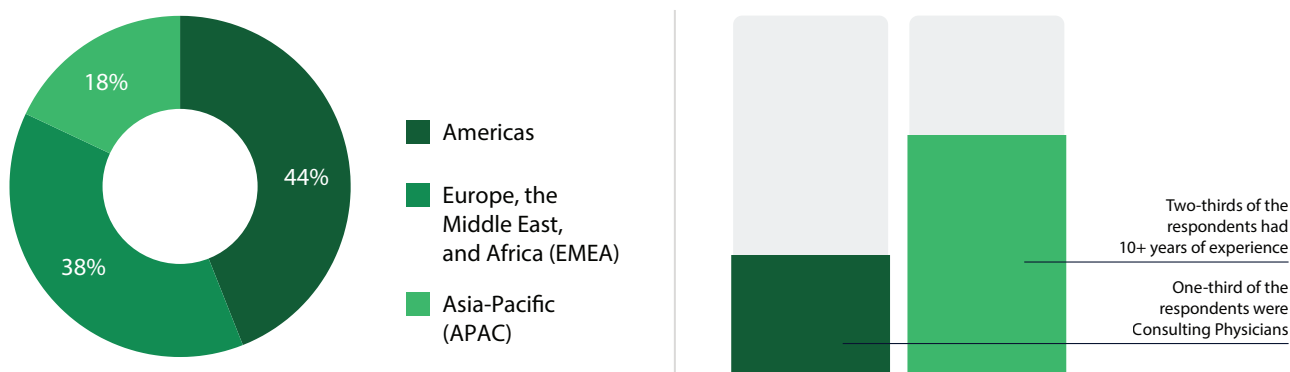


Figure 1: An overview of the respondents' distribution in 2024

By supporting educational programs that align with HCPs' content needs and preferences, Medical Affairs can facilitate the important role played in disseminating relevant medical information of interest to HCPs. Among the respondents, 31% are Consulting Physicians, and 67% have over 10 years of experience. They come from a wide range of specialties, reflecting the diverse fields within healthcare.

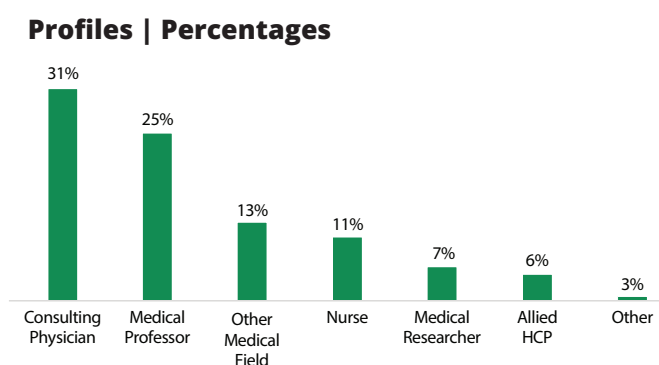


Figure 2: Respondents' profiles

# Understanding HCPs' information-seeking behavior

## Trusted sources | Percentage

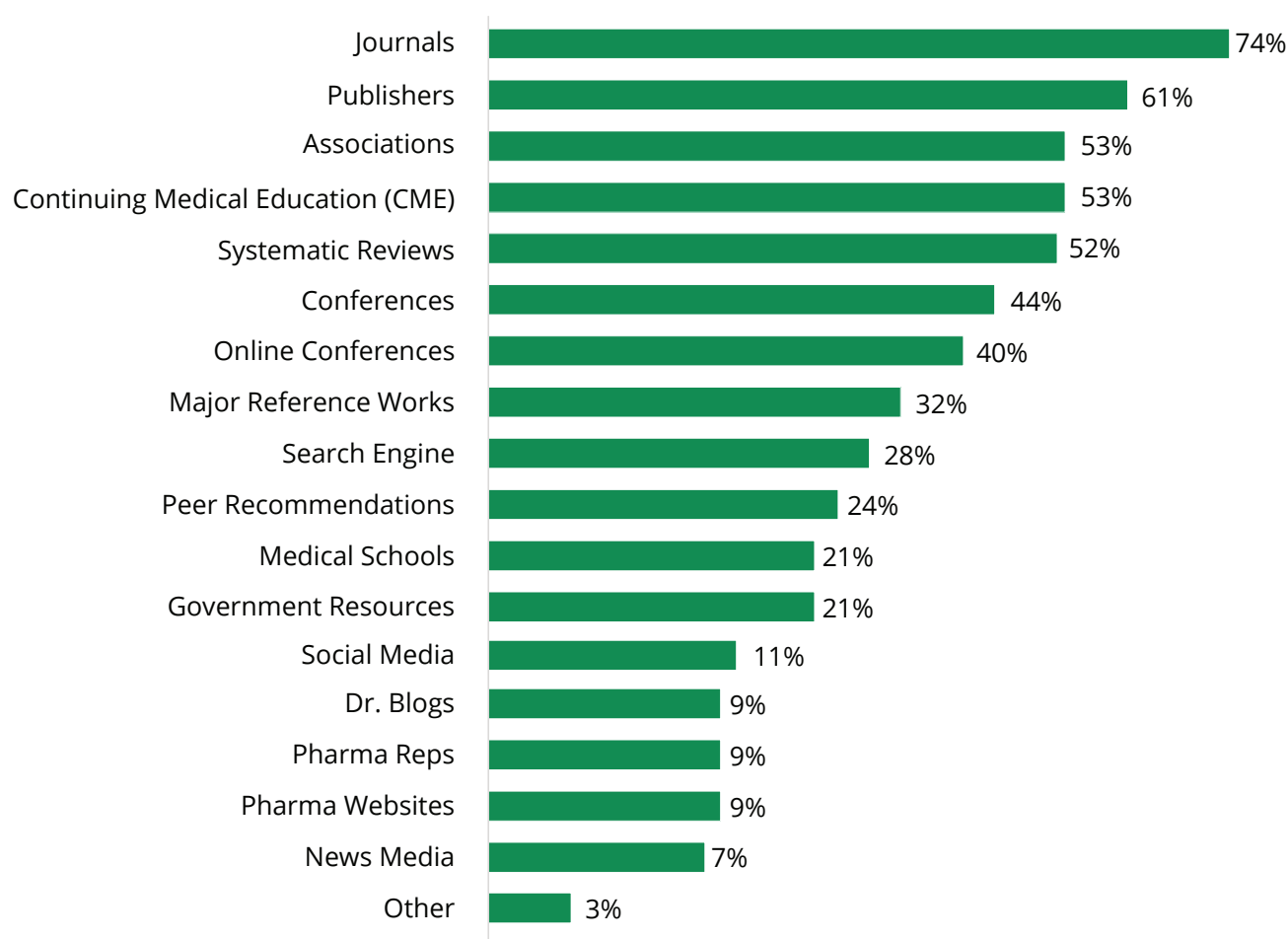


Figure 3: Sources HCPs trust

## Frequency | Percentage

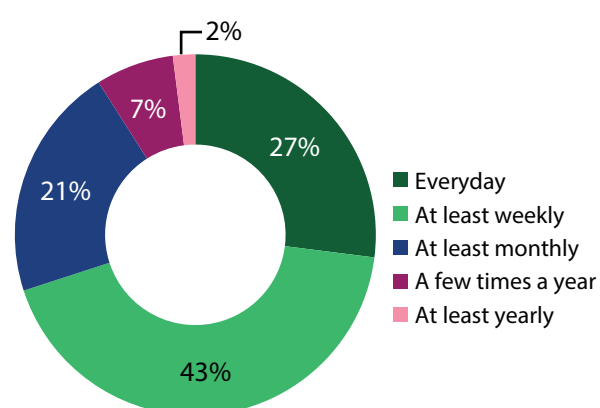


Figure 4: HCPs' search behavior for medical information

Despite demanding clinical schedules, 70% of HCPs actively seek published medical information on a weekly basis (if not daily) to build their clinical knowledge.

Reflecting this consistent demand, the survey identifies medical journals, reputable publishers, and professional associations, as the top three sources sought by HCPs for high-quality clinical information.

## Information-seeking patterns

### Number of reference materials consulted | Percentage

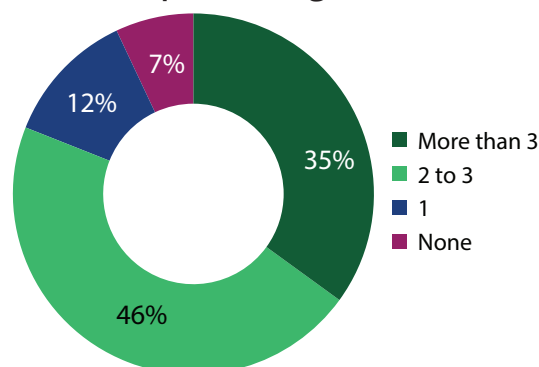


Figure 5: Sources consulted to make a clinical decision

When making clinical decisions, 81% of HCPs consult at least 2–3 reference materials, demonstrating their commitment to evidence-based practice. Nearly 8 out of 10 respondents (79%) incorporate these findings into their clinical practice guidelines.



**Nearly 8 out of 10 responders (79%)**

incorporate the findings into their clinical practice guidelines as an outcome of engaging with clinical information.

## Content format preferences

**78%** of HCPs prefer the full-text article format to consume clinical information.



**53%**

of HCPs prefer webinars



**39%**

of HCPs prefer e-learning



**36%**

of HCPs prefer e-books

While 78% of HCPs prefer full-text articles, a strong preference for diverse formats exists, including webinars (53%), e-learning (39%), and e-books (36%). This indicates the importance of delivering content in multiple formats to accommodate different learning preferences.

“ We’ve been focusing a lot on infographics and short, sweet digital content materials that can explain the science in 30 seconds... I think that it’s got to be short pieces across multiple touch points. ”

— Medical Affairs Professional



## Key challenges HCPs face

### Challenges | Percentage

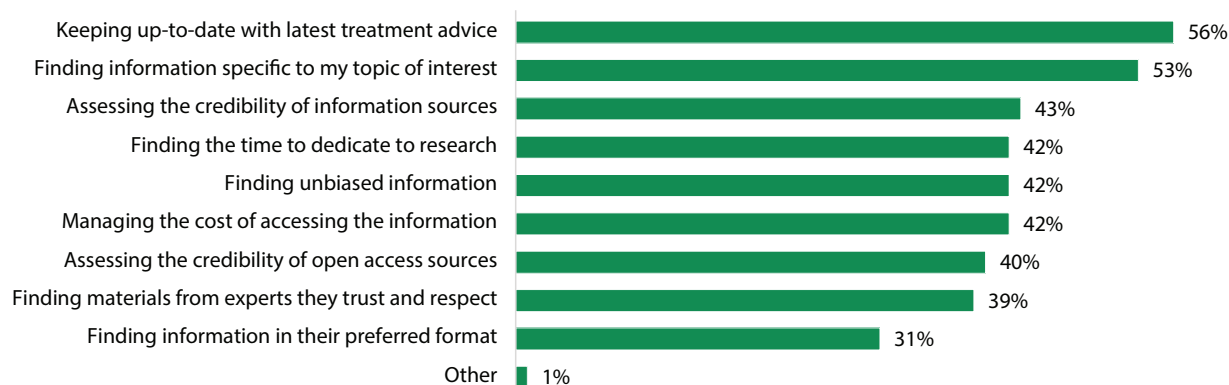


Figure 6: Challenges faced when seeking clinical information

### The top challenges HCPs face when seeking clinical information center on five areas:

56% struggle to keep up with the latest treatment advice; 53% find it hard to locate topic-specific data; 43% grapple with assessing source credibility; 42% lack sufficient research time; and 42% encounter difficulty identifying unbiased information. These obstacles highlight the need for streamlined, credible, and easily accessible educational resources.



85% of HCPs prefer downloadable content as the most important tool when gathering clinical information.



46% consult 2-3 sources to make clinical decisions.



53% find it challenging to locate information specific to their interests.

Time-saving, bite-sized, and on-demand content accessible for future reference across multiple devices and trusted platforms can make key research findings easier to access and assimilate.

## Information overload

HCPs face an overwhelming amount of information daily.<sup>4</sup> According to our 2023 Annual Global HCP Survey, HCPs would need to read for 21 hours a day to maintain their knowledge status. In our latest survey, staying up-to-date and finding information of interest continue to be the top challenges faced by more than 50% of HCPs when seeking clinical information.

Therefore, efforts to help HCPs cut through the noise by delivering relevant, useful content that is tailored to their schedules and requirements are crucial to improving how HCPs access clinical information.

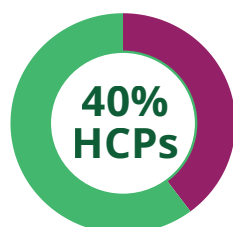
# Overcoming Obstacles: Challenges in Medical Affairs and HCP Education

Accelerated digital transformation in medical education is creating a preference for flexible learning options that blend convenience with impact.

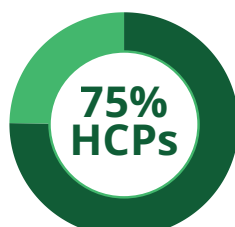
## Shifts in Medical Education

- **The rise of hybrid learning and post-conference engagement:** HCPs now seek more collaborative learning environments that merge the flexibility and convenience of virtual platforms with the immersive, hands-on benefits of in-person engagements.<sup>5</sup>

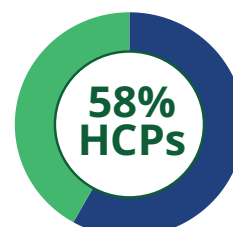
Our research shows:



Plan to attend more virtual events



Interested/very interested in receiving post-conference materials



Attended three or more virtual conferences

Figure 7: HCPs' preferences for learning approaches

Figure 8: Key learnings on events and post-conference materials

Additionally, they value post-conference resources that reinforce and expand on the knowledge gained, with 75% of HCPs interested in post-conference resources.

When unable to attend medical conferences, HCPs express strong interest in:

- Key takeaways focused on specific clinical conditions (84%)
- General roundup of key congress takeaways (77%)
- Expert opinions or analysis (77%)

This signals an opportunity for Medical Affairs to extend the reach and impact of educational events through strategic post-conference content.

“HCPs are no longer engaging in solely the traditional manner (in-person conferences, physical medical literature, live workshops/trainings, internal hospital meetings, etc.).<sup>5</sup>”

- **Self-directed learning preferences:**



**HCPs are increasingly taking control of their education, with 75% of them likely to choose a CME course if it is self-paced.**

Source: Wiley's 2024 Annual Global HCP Survey

The top factors driving HCP participation in online education reveal that:

**85%**

Value delivery by a credible source

**83%**

Prioritize flexibility in learning schedule

**83%**

Seek alignment with clinical guideline

**82%**

Appreciate clear explanations of purpose

On-demand webinars, self-paced e-learning modules, and concise content formats such as expert commentary and case studies offer HCPs convenient access to high-quality, evidence-based information.



- **Learner-centric focus<sup>6</sup>:** Medical education is moving toward a model that prioritizes clear objectives, outcome-based approaches, and practical application of knowledge.

## Integrating Learning Technologies and Innovations

### Diverse Learning Formats<sup>7</sup>

- Incorporating a variety of content formats, such as interactive e-learning modules, videos, podcasts, and virtual symposia, can cater to different learning styles and preferences. This variety not only enriches the learning experience but also promotes engagement and motivation. However, creating and curating these varied formats requires substantial time, expertise, and resources. Additionally, aligning these new formats with existing curricula and accreditation standards can complicate the integration process.

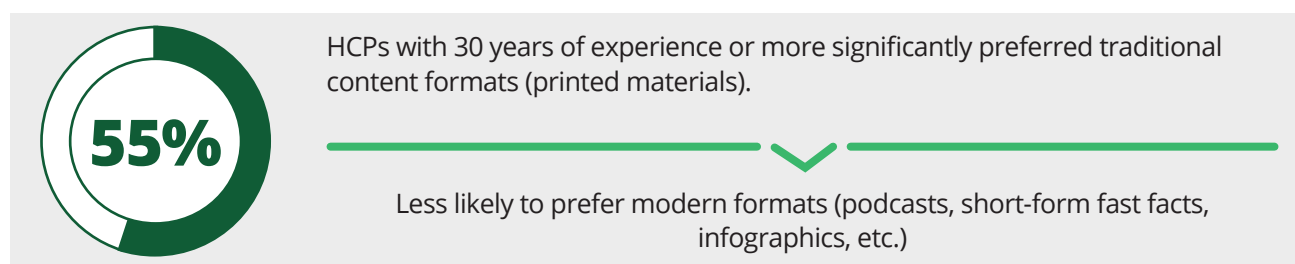
Despite full-text articles being the most preferred format for learning among HCPs (78%), the steady preference for other formats such as e-learning, e-books, and webinars indicates that incorporating diverse learning formats for HCPs is becoming increasingly necessary.

### Tracking and Analytics Limitations<sup>8</sup>

- Effective tracking and analytics are crucial for monitoring HCP progress and performance. However, many educational programs struggle with implementing comprehensive tracking systems that provide actionable insights. Without robust analytics, educators may lack the data needed to identify knowledge gaps and tailor learning experiences to individual needs. This can lead to a one-size-fits-all approach that fails to optimize the learning process for HCPs, ultimately affecting their readiness for real-world clinical challenges.

### Cultural Resistance to Change<sup>9</sup>

- While most practicing HCPs have embraced the digital era, with online medical journals (89%) and medical reference portals (84%) rated as most valuable for staying informed; a few educators and institutions may hesitate to abandon traditional teaching methods in favor of modern approaches. This resistance can stem from a lack of familiarity with digital tools, concerns about their effectiveness, and the fear of losing control over the learning process.



Overcoming this resistance requires a concerted effort to demonstrate the value of technology-enhanced education and to provide adequate support and training for educators.

### Resource Constraints<sup>9</sup>

- The integration of technology into medical education often requires significant investment in infrastructure, software, and training. Many institutions face budget constraints that limit their ability to adopt and implement these technologies effectively. Without adequate resources or expertise, educational programs may struggle to keep pace with technological advancements, resulting in a disparity in the quality of education offered to HCPs.

## Maintaining Scientific Accuracy and Compliance

- **Regulatory constraints:** Strict regulations, particularly in global markets like Europe, limit direct promotion to the public, creating barriers in reaching clinicians and requiring country-specific HCP authentication.<sup>5</sup> Navigating complex regulatory environments demands strict attention to compliance. Educational content must follow the guidelines set by authorities such as the FDA and EMA, ensuring that all information is evidence-based and free from promotional bias.

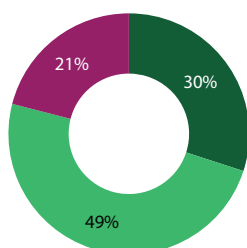
“Due to highly strict regulations in Europe (and other global markets, for example, the US), we are not able to promote directly to the general public. Communications are therefore gated, which creates more barriers to getting your message directly in front of clinicians. HCP authentication also differs from country to country.”<sup>5</sup>

- **Scientific rigor and credibility:** HCPs prefer credible, evidence-based content over promotional material. This preference was significantly higher for more experienced HCPs. 84% of HCPs surveyed identified source reputation among the top two criteria when selecting what information to use. Publishers and associations were cited as among the top three trusted sources among respondents. Therefore, collaborating with established publishers ensures that all content is rigorously peer-reviewed and evidence-based, fostering trust among HCPs.

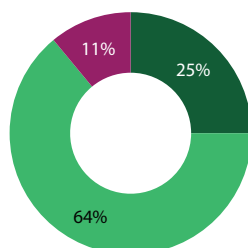


HCPs rely on trusted sources like medical journals, which are the top choice for 74% of respondents.

Accessing product information



Accessing diagnosis or condition



■ I have no preference  
■ I prefer pharma-sponsored sources  
■ I prefer non-pharma-sponsored sources

Figure 9: Sources preferred by HCPs for diagnosis and product information



HCPs more strongly prefer non-pharma sources for diagnosis (64%) and product information (49%).

When seeking new clinical information, 60% of HCPs value the clear presentation of any commercial elements.

“Physicians certainly want something that’s been peer-reviewed, been published, and something that they can have a little bit more credence behind. They really want something that they are a little bit more comfortable with and familiar with.”

— Medical Affairs Professional



*“ There is always a certain bias that the physicians see when something comes from a company, right? So, you need to have the right blend of things that come from the company. Then ideally you have a face behind it, which is someone they know, like an MSL and someone they trust, right? Trust is a big thing there. ”*

— Medical Affairs Professional

*“ Tying anything back to a congress or journal will always, always carry more weight. You really do need to make sure in order because any if it's not credible, people can smell that a mile away. ”*

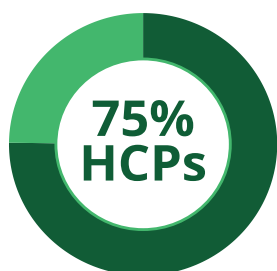
— Medical Affairs Professional



of HCPs consider online medical journals and medical reference portals as valuable or very valuable. Yet only...



of the respondents cite pharma websites and pharma-sponsored events to be valuable resources for staying informed of new clinical developments.



Plan to attend independent medical events

According to the survey, more than 75% of HCPs plan to attend independent medical events. This learning preference highlights a prioritization on independent delivery channels providing unbiased, more credible platforms for CME. Medical Affairs teams must adapt to these challenges, developing strategies to meet the increasing demand for credible, evidence-based content in a fast-evolving digital landscape.

Figure 10: HCPs' preference for learning approaches

*“ Independent channels have become more effective because HCPs know it's solely driven by an educational partner rather than a company. But if you can get a stamp and support of any society, it is always advised as it gives another level of credibility, because you bring in another stakeholder, which is a credible stakeholder. ”*

— Medical Affairs Professional



# Revolutionizing Medical Education: Strategies for Better Engagement

Based on our research findings, we recommend these evidence-based strategies for enhancing HCP engagement through medical education:

**Prioritize source credibility:** With 85% of HCPs citing delivery by a credible source as a top factor for participation in online CME and 75% preferring independent medical events like society-affiliated medical conferences, partnering with publishers offers distinct advantages for delivering high-quality medical education programs<sup>11</sup>, such as access to trusted content, medical societies, and expert Key Opinion Leaders.



## **Define learning outcomes:**

Clearly articulated learning objectives ensure that educational activities are targeted and effective, allowing HCPs to know what to expect and how to measure their success. Collaborations with professional societies can expand the reach and impact of medical education initiatives, bringing in a wider audience and reinforcing the educational framework.



## **Adopt a learner-centric approach:**<sup>12</sup>

Customizing educational materials based on identified knowledge gaps enhances relevance and impact, making it easier for HCPs to apply new information in their practice. Partnerships with leading experts and access to influential journals enhance the quality and relevance of educational materials, aligning with the latest research and clinical insights.

*“One of the most important things to do when trying to provide HCPs with education is making sure that it's relevant to the particular audience that you're in front of.”*

— Medical Affairs Professional



**Deliver downloadable, digestible content:** With 85% of HCPs valuing downloadable content, creating portable, accessible resources is essential. Consider concise formats that respect HCPs' time constraints while preserving scientific rigor.



**Embrace multi-format content delivery:** While full-text articles remain the gold standard, supplementing with diverse formats like webinars (preferred by 53% of HCPs), e-learning modules (39%), and short videos (35%), meets varied learning preferences and enhances accessibility.



**Provide hybrid models and post-conference resources:** With over 75% of HCPs expressing interest in post-event materials—particularly key takeaways—combine digital and in-person formats to maximize educational reach and accommodate those unable to attend live events.



**80%**

of respondents consider credibility, flexibility, alignment with clinical guidelines, and clarity to be important factors influencing their decision to participate in online CME and e-learning programs.

# Measuring Success: Evaluating the Impact of Medical Education on HCPs

Understanding the impact of medical education initiatives is vital for improving learning performance and demonstrating value. Moore's Outcomes Framework offers a structured approach, from tracking participation and satisfaction to assessing changes in clinical practice and patient outcomes. This framework helps educators evaluate effectiveness, identify areas for improvement, and align programs with healthcare objectives.<sup>10</sup>

## Steps to measure educational effectiveness and refine strategies:<sup>11</sup>

Implement comprehensive systems to assess the impact of educational activities.

- **Collect and analyze data** on healthcare provider, HCP engagement, and feedback to enhance educational quality.
- **Measure predefined outcomes** to ensure transparency and improve patient care through optimized education strategies.
- **Assess knowledge retention** through quizzes and surveys, monitoring long-term retention, observing changes in clinical behavior, and evaluating patient care improvements linked to education.

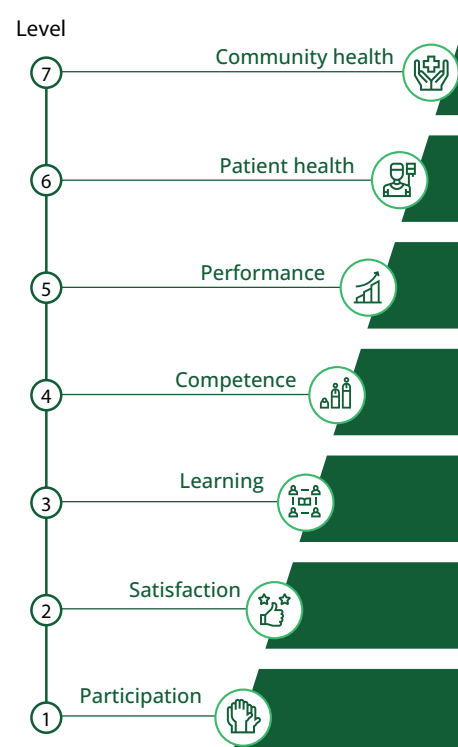


Figure 11: Moore's Outcomes Framework

By systematically evaluating educational initiatives across these dimensions, Medical Affairs teams can refine strategies, allocate resources effectively, and demonstrate the tangible value of educational programs.

**Focus on patient-centered care:** Medical education programs that focus on patient-centered approaches lead to better outcomes by equipping HCPs with the skills to involve patients in care decisions. Tools such as simplified infographic summaries in concise, visual, and lay-language can help HCPs easily absorb and explain complex, published scientific information to non-specialist audiences.

Integrating these best practices can enable pharmaceutical organizations to develop effective medical education programs that engage HCPs and enhance patient outcomes.

# Conclusion: A Path Forward for Medical Education

Contemporary medical education must transform complex scientific information into engaging formats. This helps HCPs stay informed about medical advancements and positions pharmaceutical companies as trusted partners in healthcare. By supporting trusted, credible medical education programs, companies can play a key role in advancing medical practice and build long-term relationships with HCPs.

By partnering with Wiley, Medical Affairs teams can:

- Overcome the trust gap through credible, independent channels.
- Deliver content in formats that meet diverse HCP preferences.
- Extend the reach and impact of educational initiatives.
- Measure and demonstrate tangible value in improving patient care.

Ultimately, effective medical education is about more than information delivery—it's about building trust, enhancing clinical practice, and improving patient outcomes. As the leading society publisher, our unmatched credibility, expert networks, and commitment to advancing medical knowledge support these goals, positioning Medical Affairs teams as trusted scientific partners rather than simply information providers.

To elevate your medical education initiatives and create meaningful impact on HCP engagement and patient outcomes, contact us to explore partnership opportunities.

Learn more: <https://wiley.com/corporate-solutions>



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