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Marc Iskowitz
Executive editor
MM&M

IS IT FINALLY TIME TO RETIRE THE WORD 'PATIENT'?

The radical reshaping of healthcare through digitization and personalization, and its effect on both the disease journey and brands' success in engaging HCPs, has spurred a broad rethink. Nothing is sacred in this process, least of all semantics.

As the healthcare system transforms, it's only natural that communicators advocate for changes to the accepted lexicon. For instance, considering that terms like "human" and "consumer" have worked their way into common industry parlance, marketers are questioning whether "patient" is still the best way to describe this stakeholder. After all, aren't patients just consumers who, for whatever reason, have a brush with the health system?

That was just one subject debated during a fascinating roundtable discussion earlier this month that drew participants from life-science service firms, social media, publishers, agencies and of course biopharma. All were convened by MM&M to discuss ramifications of the ongoing consumerization of healthcare and digital transformation of everything from clinical development to marketing.

Their conversation reflects the tension (ahem, "delicate balance") between the more holistic view brands are taking, and the reality pharma marketers face in their jobs everyday. Read on for the highlights.

SPONSOR PARTICIPANTS

Stephen Silvestro, chief commercial officer, OptimizeRx

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Craig Haines, chief revenue officer, Verywell

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Mary Michael, VP, patient advocacy and stakeholder management, Otsuka

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Dyan Bryson, director patient engagement, Inspired Health Strategies

Lisa Bookwalter, director of client solutions, health, Twitter

CONTENTS

- 4. How Patients are Reshaping the Pharma Industry**
- 7. Success in Today's Evolving Pharma Marketing Landscape: Going Deeper into Digital Marketing**
- 10. Making the shift from the patient journey to the human journey**

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HOW PATIENTS ARE RESHAPING THE PHARMA INDUSTRY

Sponsor: Purohit Navigation

Moderators: Anshal Purohit, president, Purohit Navigation and Marc Iskowitz, executive editor, MM&M

“Should the healthcare industry be looking at people less like patients and more like consumers who get sick?” Marc Iskowitz, MM&M’s executive editor, asked participants to kick off the first session of the day, How Patients are Reshaping the Pharma Industry, sponsored by Purohit Navigation. This question prompted the group to take a step back and examine what it really means to be a patient in today’s ever changing healthcare landscape, and how that role has shifted.

“The patient dynamic was controlled by the industry for a long time, but that is definitely changing now,” said Anshal Purohit, president of Purohit Navigation and co-moderator of the discussion. “We need to understand our role and responsibility when it comes to changing that dynamic.”

Lisa Bookwalter from Twitter agreed, noting that patients no longer want their condition to be the center of their identity, a fact that industry leaders need to start recognizing if they want to find a way to be able to truly connect with patients.

“When I look at the conversations people are having, there’s this push and pull, where people don’t want to be called patients, they don’t want to be called sick, but at the same time, they are sharing their health struggles in this very raw, very real way.”

“In other words,” she continued, “they may be sharing

“People want healthcare providers or marketers to talk to them and understand where they’re coming from.”

LISA BOOKWALTER, TWITTER

stories about their psoriasis or another condition and recognizing that ‘yes, I do have this,’ but they also expect anyone they interface with to recognize that those same experiences impact their life as a mother, a friend, etc.”

“Patients now have a great voice,” Purohit added. “They have advocacy, they have the ear of their colleagues and of their contemporaries, but very often the information they have is inaccurate and the industry isn’t always in a credible position to provide any input into that dialogue that patients are having amongst themselves.”

Mary Michael of Otsuka said that one way she feels the industry can simplify the front end of healthcare and make it easier for patients to engage when and where they want to is by determining the types of consumer models they typically gravitate toward.

“People are now demanding more than just medicine and treatment,” she said. “They’re basically saying if I don’t get what I need from you to reach my wellness goals, then I will hold you accountable. They’re comparing the healthcare system to an Amazon or Uber model. It’s that idea of service on-demand that people want. It’s those experiences in other consumer categories that can help pharma learn how to better engage.”

Bookwalter said in her experience, the expectation for an instant response is one of the many reasons social media has become such an integral part of the healthcare realm.

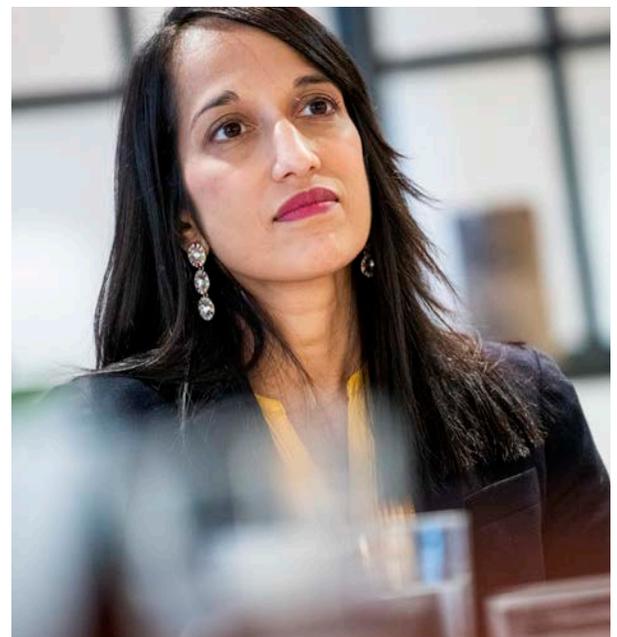
“When people put themselves out there, they expect to be heard,” she said. “They want healthcare providers or marketers to talk to them and understand where they’re

“The patient dynamic was controlled by the industry for a long time, but that is definitely changing now.”

ANSHAL PUROHIT, PUROHIT NAVIGATION

coming from, but there is that sense of fear as well when you’re sharing something so emotional or personal.”

Dyan Bryson of Inspired Health Strategies said she feels social media has helped to shift some of the focus in the industry onto emotional health and mental awareness, which is essential for marketers looking to truly connect with patients.



Anshal Purohit, president of Purohit Navigation, led the first session of the day about how patients are reshaping the pharma industry.





Dyan Bryson, director of patient engagement at Inspired Health Strategies, spoke about social media's role in shifting the industry's focus onto emotional health.



Claire Phillips, marketing director global immunology and specialty medicine at GSK, shared how her team redefined the role of the sales rep.



Mary Michael, VP, patient advocacy and stakeholder management at Otsuka, noted education at the point of care is key for drugs and therapies.

"We all tend to lean back on regulatory as an excuse for why we don't do more social media in this industry," she said. "But the truth is, it's the best platform to allow patients to feel truly heard, so we need to find a way to get past that barrier."

The struggle of pharma to make an emotional connection is one that Craig Haines of Verywell said goes back to the idea of "the white lab coats and the political perspective" portrayed in most campaigns of late.

"These types of ads just don't allow patients to create any kind of emotional connection between a pharmaceutical company and the drugs they are currently taking," he explained. "This is why pharma has been unable to create brand loyalty via an emotional connection and why people have stopped looking to publishers and pharma for credible information, and instead are focusing more on the human connectivity offered by social media."

One of the ways the group suggested pharma can revitalize its credibility and capitalize on human connection is by being there to support patients, right at the time of their initial diagnosis.

Stephen Silvestro of Optimize Rx shared that as a cancer survivor, one of the scariest moments of his health journey was the day he received his diagnosis.

"We all tend to lean back on regulatory as an excuse for why we don't do more social media in this industry. But the truth is, it's the best platform to allow patients to feel truly heard, so we need to find a way to get past that barrier."

DYAN BRYSON, INSPIRED HEALTH STRATEGIES

"I'm someone who is highly educated about our industry and spent 15 years doing research analytics, core tasking, clinical trial reviews, etc. But when you hear those words you default to internal panic, and you don't know who to trust," he said. "That experience as a patient made me wake up and realize we really need to work on patient engagement so that when people are at their most vulnerable, we are providing them with a community of care and not making them feel like we're just using them for compensation."

Another way in which pharma can embrace patients at the moment they need care the most is through social listening, said Bookwalter.

"Responding in real time to patients can be incredibly powerful," she said, noting that "when someone is in a tough spot and you immediately get back to them, it can make all the difference in the world."

Michael agreed, noting social listening has been an integral part of any successful campaign she's worked on.

"Today's patients are connected, empowered and experts in their own disease state, so if they're willing to share their personal experiences, then it behooves us to listen," she said. "Creating campaigns that use real patient language can be an incredible opportunity for pharma to shift its strategy towards a more naturalistic approach, and demonstrate to patients that we're actually listening to what they're saying."



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Success in Today's Evolving Pharma Marketing Landscape:

GOING DEEPER INTO DIGITAL MARKETING

Sponsor: OptimizeRx

Moderators: Stephen Silvestro, chief commercial officer, OptimizeRx and Marc Iskovitz, executive editor, MM&M

Seesawing between a rise in virtual physician visits and a decrease in the effectiveness of traditional media tactics, pharma marketing has experienced a substantial evolution over the course of the last decade.

In the second session of the day, Success in Today's Evolving Pharma Landscape, sponsored by OptimizeRx, participants discussed the current digital marketing landscape and described some of the hurdles they are facing in trying to communicate with healthcare providers. They also shared their new approaches in engaging with providers.

Stephen Silvestro, chief commercial officer at OptimizeRx and co-moderator of the session, noted the industry doesn't spend a lot of time talking about the physician experience.

"The world of the physician has literally been turned upside down," he said. "Just as much as the patient, if



Stephen Silvestro, chief commercial officer at OptimizeRx, debated the merits of going deeper into digital marketing at the November 7 event.

not more, because while for most patients engaging with the healthcare system is temporary, for physicians it's their whole life."

One major roadblock he referenced was the EMR system, which he said needs to be streamlined in order to reduce physicians' workflow burden on the back end.

"The biggest complaints we get through our market research is about how flawed the EMR process is," he explained. "Physicians are spending so much of their time in there — time they could spend speaking with patients — because they're so worried that they'll miss a note or important information that someone could turn around and say, 'Hey, you missed that,' which could result in a potential lawsuit or them not being reimbursed for a medication."

Silvestro noted that this concern of missing something makes most physicians he's dealt with hesitant to spend time outside the EMR reading messaging or onboarding unless it has demonstrated that it is adding real value to their practice in some way.

"It has to be something relevant to the patient they're seeing at the time," he said, "such as clinical trial results from a new drug that may help them or guidelines for a new therapy they may be interested in trying. They have to feel it's worth the distraction."

Mary Michael of Otsuka agreed, noting education at the point of care could really help to emphasize a drug or therapy in a very effective way.

"Unfortunately, there's just not a lot of it being done,

"Physicians are spending so much of their time in there — time they could spend speaking with patients."

STEPHEN SILVESTRO, OPTIMIZERX

and I really don't understand why, because it can be very product diagnostic," she added.

The group was in agreement that providing education based on an individual patient's needs is essential for doctors looking to provide the kind of "connected care" patients are expecting, with Silvestro noting there really is no such thing as a standard patient journey anymore.

"You can no longer simply plaster marketing topics across a screen and hope for the best," he said. "Marketers need to find a way to break out an individual journey for each patient, come up with tactics and strategies that align to support that journey and then identify and leverage key points of that journey. It can no longer be a 'one-size-fits-all' approach."

This same individualized approach is also being applied to another role that's changed drastically in the last several years: the sales rep.

Claire Phillips of GSK shared how she and her team have been focusing on how they can better equip their reps to have an effective interaction with physicians.

"We've had to almost completely redefine what their role is," she said. "And not just in the sense of, 'Oh, we don't do golf outings or go to hockey games anymore,' but really defining what a face-to-face interaction with a physician needs to accomplish, and what mechanisms are needed in order to deliver that."





One of the challenges with this, she shared, is reps are often getting their best insights in hindsight. In other words, they're finding out all the right things, just too late to be able to do anything with them.

"It's forward-looking research versus retrospective research and our industry is predicated on retrospective research," she said. "But a lot of folks are trying to change that. You see that within patient journey mapping, that there's at least a trend toward asking the right questions."

"While we put a lot of emphasis on speaking to patients as people, we don't always speak to clinicians like people."

MARY MICHAEL, OTSUKA

MM&M's Marc Iskowicz probed the group to think further about why marketers seemed to be missing the connection of where the patient and HCP journeys intersect.

"Part of the problem is that while we put a lot of emphasis on speaking to patients as people, we don't always speak to clinicians like people," Michael explained. "And I don't entirely know how to fix that. Maybe it's back to the social listening, where we flip it and we're listening to the physicians for a bit in addition to the patients so we can get to a point where we can look at the physician as a person in addition to a doctor. Maybe that's the way we glean some of those more personal insights."

Silvestro agreed, noting this is something his company has been exploring as of late.

With advances in technology, we have access to the type of information that can help guide the best ways to deliver a more personalized and individual message directly to an HCP. The challenge is sifting through that information to deliver the message in a way that is most helpful to the HCP at different points in the care process.

"When we find that balance, it will be an incredibly effective and non-disruptive way to start a more meaningful dialogue and deliver information to clinicians," he continued. "And not just 'recycled' messages from other platforms, but information the physician can truly engage with."



Rhonda Sciarra, associate director, global external communications at Leo Pharma, was on hand for all three of the New York City sessions.



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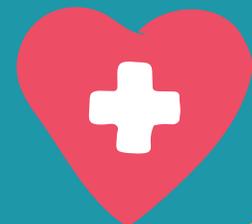


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MAKING THE SHIFT FROM THE PATIENT JOURNEY TO THE HUMAN JOURNEY

Sponsor: Verywell

Moderators: Craig Haines, chief revenue officer, Verywell and Marc Iskovitz, executive editor, MM&M

In today's world of supporting people in the quest to improve their health, empathy has emerged as an important theme. "The challenge that we, as marketers, are faced with is the ability to take action against this at the individual level," said Craig Haines, chief revenue officer at Verywell, as he kicked off the day's third and final discussion.

"This is especially true for organizations and brands that view the world through the lens of the traditional patient journey versus the reality of the human journey," he continued. "In order to make a meaningful difference in how we support patients, we need to be thinking about brand solutions that also take into consideration the emotional aspect of living with a condition in order to get to solutions that are closer to the individual level."

"They're already looking for information because they have a question about their health."

CRAIG HAINES, VERYWELL

"One way to achieve this goal," suggested Mary Michael of Otsuka, "is by empowering patients with their own health data."

"It's all about individuals owning their own health data and then mobilizing against it," she continued. "It's going back to the idea of customization and personalized medicine — about taking control of your own health and not just waiting for the disease to happen to you."

Iskovitz pointed out that with the advent of EMRs giving patients the option to download their own health records and with wearables like Fitbit, Apple Watch and Google Health providing important health insights, patients have access to more of their own data



Craig Haines, chief revenue officer at Verywell, discussed the emerging theme of empathy during his session at MM&M's TrendTalks.



Lisa Bookwalter, director of client solutions, health at Twitter, urged people in the healthcare space to recognize the mental health journeys that go along with conditions.

than ever before. He pressed the group to consider how companies could best help patients to process this data in a meaningful way.

Haines said these patient-driven data sources are an invaluable entry point to meeting the patient along one aspect of their journey, but there are so many other aspects of the human journey that we must consider.

He shared the findings of a recent study conducted by Verywell, which had found that people performing Google searches are at very different emotional states along their own journey, so their experiences with personal health searches can either be a very positive or a very negative emotional experience.

"They're already looking for information because they have a question about their health. So they come with some level of discontent or panic, depending on what point they're at in their journey," he said. "So it presented us with the question of, 'What are we actually doing with these emotional elements of the patient journey?' And this is where brands and organizations can start to insert themselves and help attain that loyalty we've been talking about."

Lisa Bookwalter agreed, adding that those in the healthcare space should recognize that there is a mental health journey associated with every condition. By taking the time to address patients' emotional health, whether through social listening or the creation of patient com-



munities, she added, companies can learn how to truly hone in on patients' needs and in turn garner some incredibly valuable insights.

"I think that is where the app space, the social space and the publisher space can be a real conduit for companies to help with emotional needs by bringing support and community forward," she said.

"Patients understand that nobody has all the answers," she continued, "but they want to know that someone is there saying, 'I hear you, I understand, I empathize,' because that's as big a part of the journey as the clinical and the actual treatments."

Claire Phillips said one of the major challenges she's seen with creating online health communities, is that you must be committed for the long haul.

"I've seen a lot of instances where companies get a great idea or insight, then go ahead and implement it without an exit strategy," she said. "They're doing great work up front and bringing all these patients in, and then literally just leaving them hanging there."

"I had to learn for myself. No one who treated me said anything about it, so I was caught very off guard."

ROBERT COHEN, MATRX PHARMACEUTICALS

"That's why pharma gets a bad name," added Michael. "Because of things like that, where it's too transactional — that sense of I liked what you said, I bought in, I thought we were getting married, and then you just dumped me."

Phillips agreed, noting that pharma needs to do better than simply stating the side effects of a particular medication and instead try to provide patients with a timeline of when they might expect to experience these reactions and for how long.

"I think a lot of patients have had an experience where they were on the right medication but they didn't know it was going to take three weeks or they didn't know when the side effects would wear off, so they stopped, and now they've written off that medication as a failure."

Robert Cohen of Matrx Pharmaceuticals said he was able to relate from personal experience, and shared that when he was put on Oxycodone following spinal issues earlier this year, he did not expect the crippling side effects that came with it.

"I had to learn for myself. No one who treated me said anything about it, so I was caught very off guard, and eventually just told my doctor, I can't take it anymore, get me off of this."

Michael pointed out that situations like Cohen's were a perfect example of why patient advocacy groups are so incredibly important for building a bridge between pharma and patients.

"I think we have an obligation as pharma to provide these types of advocacy organizations," she said. "A lot of us in the industry don't actually see patients, so it becomes even more important to have real, authentic conversations with individuals about their journey and their experience, and not just from an artificial

market research perspective, but from a consumer experience perspective."

Haines agreed, noting his company has learned by talking directly to patients, namely how to make sure that they're addressing the emotional aspect of an individual's journey and not just the clinical aspects.

"It's really helped teach us how to create content that shows empathy, and a website experience that is comprehensive in specific human needs, easy to navigate and respectful as it relates to advertisements," he said. "We believe this will not only help our clients to deepen their relationships with their patients, but also provide them with unique opportunities to be a solution for patients during these emotional times."



Robert Cohen, chairman, president and CEO of Matrx Pharmaceuticals, warned of being caught off guard by side effects of medications.

