

Future Strategies for IDN Engagement: A multi-client tracking study

Background

Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, many of the nation's health systems face a confluence of challenges: overflowing ICUs, overworked staff, negative cash flow, and furloughed employees.

At the same time, the nation's biopharmaceutical companies have responded to the crisis by pulling their salesforces out of the field — including key account teams responsible for managing relationships with IDNs. These teams have stayed together in recent weeks through videoconferencing and have stepped up their account-planning efforts while anticipating a return to the field sometime this summer or fall.

In this environment, many of our clients are wondering what's next, asking: "How do we re-engage with our customers?"

Project Objective

Our objective is to help market-access executives and key account teams determine best practices for customer engagement. As this is a fluid environment, we will accomplish this objective by executing a quarterly tracking study of hospital and health system pharmacy and medical directors.

Our research will focus on the current environment within hospitals as it relates to care management, workflow and processes, patient engagement, patient support programs, and specialty pharmacy. We will also be directly focusing on the Pharma-IDN relationship.

Key research questions include:

1. What are the future implications of COVID-19 on access to decision makers and influencers?
2. How are stakeholders engaging with Pharma today, and how do stakeholders expect interactions with Pharma to change in the future?
3. What has been the effect of COVID-19 on how patients are being treated, and are these changes permanent?
4. How have prescribing practices changed during COVID-19?
5. How has the role of specialty pharmacy evolved in its interaction with patients?

Methodology

This project includes both qualitative and quantitative research methods.

- We will complete 15-20 telephone interviews with key IDN stakeholders, primarily pharmacy directors and medical directors, in preparation for our online survey.
- On a quarterly basis, we will conduct an online survey with a panel of approximately 150 pharmacy directors and medical directors. The surveys will be fielded in May, August, and December 2020, and in March 2021.

We expect the COVID-19 situation to be dynamic. It is possible – if not likely – that the virus will surge across the U.S. in hot spots over the next 18 months. We expect that some of the questions will change with each update, as a reflection of the changing environment.

Initial research partners will have an opportunity to contribute questions to the qualitative interview guide and online survey, subject to final approval by Darwin.

Project Timeline and Deliverables

We will provide a brief summary of top-line results as early as June 12, 2020. The final research report will be delivered as a PDF on June 29, 2020. We will present our findings via web conferencing after each report is delivered.

Item	Delivery
Top-line results available	6/12/20
Written research report delivered	6/29/20
Report 2 delivered	9/25/20
Report 3 delivered	1/29/21
Update 4 delivered	4/23/21

Project Fees

To be determined.

About Darwin Research Group

Darwin Research Group provides advanced market intelligence and in-depth customer insights to health care executives. Our strategic focus is on health care delivery systems and the global shift toward value-based care.

About the Project Leader

John Marchica is a veteran health care strategist and CEO of Darwin Research Group. Previously, after a successful stretch in management at Abbott Laboratories, he was the founder and CEO of FaxWatch, a leading medical education company and two-time member of the Inc. 500 list of America's fastest growing companies. John did his undergraduate work in economics at Knox College, has an MBA and M.A. in public policy from the University of Chicago, and completed his Ph.D. coursework and doctoral exams at The Dartmouth Institute. He is a faculty associate in the W.P. Carey School of Business and the graduate College of Health Solutions at Arizona State University, and serves as an active member of the American College of Healthcare Executives.