

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Supporting Patient-centric Healthcare And Navigating Through The Pandemic

10-MIN SUMMARY



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There are 3 simple maxims to support patient-centric healthcare and ensure that businesses get by through the pandemic: What do we know? How do we feel? What do we do?

What do we know? Healthcare professional (HCPs) have to trust the science to guide their decisions on behalf of their consumers. They must ask whether the data represent real insights about the consumers. Eight months into the pandemic, we clearly know that Covid-19 is accelerating digital transformation. Short-term business models have to be rethought, and organizations must stay nimble and flexible. In the retail pharmacy sector, customers have long been able to get products at pharmacy counters, via a drive-through, or through mail. But, since Covid-19, digital pharmacy is rising rapidly and retailers like Walgreens are adding distribution options like contactless, curbside pickup and home delivery. It is logistically complicated for pharmacies to adapt, but as evidenced, it is achievable in a short period of time.

The biggest short-term shift has been the robust deployment of consumer utilization of technology. Not long ago, engagement in digital services would have been difficult for this population, especially on a large scale, but

technology adoption among seniors is rising. In 2000, just 14% of those aged 65+ were internet users; today it is 73%, and more than half of them own smartphones. Speeding technology adoption and improving services for these customers mean they, and businesses, will be better positioned to use other digital services when the situation improves.

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How do we feel? Business people have instincts and rely on shared knowledge and experiences to help with interpretation and to gain insights from consumers to make informed decisions. Smart organizations use times of crisis to prepare for the good times. It is not yet known whether Covid-19 will lead to the lasting change needed in healthcare. Companies must stay true to their core mission and not be distracted by shiny objects that don't offer real solutions. Everyone

adapts over time, and people will likely return to a more normal way of life. Successful companies in life sciences and pharma have experience of seeing into the future but, in the short term, they need to keep running and serving customers. This unprecedented situation can be used to better define who we are and what we are going to do to seize new opportunities.

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What do we do? Healthcare professionals (HCPs) seeking to improve outcomes for millions of Americans have to be deliberate about the ideas, practices, and protocols that are put into action. We have had to rethink how technology is used to improve the lives of older adults. One innovation is a pilot being run in California to provide virtual social gatherings for seniors, such as book clubs and cooking nights. There is no substitute for in-person engagement, but digital enables organizations to reach out to more consumers with their products and messages. If an audience trusts the brand, then it can deliver much more, albeit virtually. The future will be a combination of physical and digital engagements. To use technology effectively and ensure the right focus, it is necessary to understand customers. In this case, to get seniors online, they have to

be engaged with relevant, meaningful content; hence, consumer research has been extended during the pandemic. Again, what do they know? How do they feel? What do they do? This is a daily priority in retail, but more of it is needed in healthcare. Surveying them regularly ensures that their needs are being met, now and in the future. For example, more than 80% of respondents plan to get a flu shot, but they have a "wait-and-see" attitude regarding the Covid-19 vaccine. There is an opportunity here to provide educational content about the new vaccine.

Remote patient monitoring, telehealth, and smartphones have game-changing potential with the right design, proper implementation, and a "patient-first" approach. The key is to know your customer and what they are experiencing and feeling right now instead of relying on what we knew before the pandemic. Ask them how they are adopting digital solutions, what they want, and what they are missing. Then the investment can be targeted to the right areas.

The healthcare industry is placing greater emphasis on preventative health, and payers are launching broad-based programs to improve social determinants. Regulators are reimbursing a wide range of services, and there is a continuing effort to shift toward value-based models. Digital uptake will not only help with costs but also with reach. Over half of the members now doing digital instructor courses were not attending the regular gym before. This shows how digital is a means of engagement and activation that is uniquely distinct from the physical ways of encouraging people to attend the gym. Digital engagement is helping to support

outcomes and adherence. There are reams of digital data that can be used, not just to improve the product or get more sales, but to provide insights into how to make services more attractive. The value is not just in the price but in the overall experience. This is where wearables and remote monitoring can bring real benefits to the healthcare system, enabling patients to take more control.

The more pharmacy, preventative-oriented organizations and drug manufacturers collaborate, the faster and broader the impact will be on the healthcare ecosystem, and the greater the benefits to patients.

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