



# GAPSULE

## Panel Discussion no. 2

### TRANSCRIPT



<https://gapsule.docmode.org/>

## **BACKGROUND:**

COVID has disrupted many activities with frequent lockdowns and social distancing. These things haven't even spared the pharma industry, as they experienced closed clinics, restricted face-to-face meetings with medical practitioners, or severe restrictions in travel for a product briefing exercise.

Now in this situation, it is imperative to be part of this entire transformation. This transformation, which is led by technology, ensures a better connection with doctors. And the doctors to connect better with the patients using these emerging technologies. It has become more imperative to understand the areas the pharma industry is missing out on.

One of the areas that really impacted during this pandemic was knowledge sharing. Knowledge sharing includes the production and dissemination of clinical data, scientific breakthroughs to keep the medical practitioner in the loop of new developments which would help them to excel in their practice. But with restrictions between physician and pharma company meetings due to COVID, the knowledge marketing went for a pause period.

This led to the launching of Gapsule by DOCMODE, an effort to just bring in the top experts from different pharma companies for a panel discussion on focus areas where it could be either around the emerging technologies could be around the emerging trends or could just be discussing what we together need to do in order to build a better future.

## **WHAT IS GAPSULE:**

Gapsule has been conceptualized to fill the knowledge gap and help to improve the interaction between the pharma companies and medical practitioners.

## **MODE:**

### **Panel Discussion Series**

- **Session 2: 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2021**

## PANELISTS:



**Mr. Girish R. Kulkarni**

Vice-President (Sales and Marketing) -  
Intas Pharmaceuticals Ltd.



**Mr. Abhinav Sharma**

Marketing Head -  
Cadila Pharmaceuticals Ltd.



**Ms. Dolan Bastya**

General Manager - Business and  
Marketing, Asia Pacific,  
Glenmark Pharmaceuticals Ltd.

## MODERATOR:



**Ms. Zeenat Saba Khan**

Senior Manager - Commercial  
Communication & Digital - Abbott

## KEY HIGHLIGHTS:

- Currently the pharma marketer's community is at crossroads, since they have to look at multiple aspects of marketing, as the new age customers are not just Doctors but also patient community.
- In last two decades the challenges for pharma and healthcare professional have undergone a huge change. If we just focus on India, two decades back the internet revolution started which democratized availability of scientific knowledge for all. With digitization there was a shift of scientific knowledge from pharma marketers to healthcare professionals. So earlier if the medical rep was holder of scientific knowledge, with internet, they lost this title, which impacted how they engaged with doctors.
- Pre Covid patients and Doctors as well preferred physical consultation, but due to pandemic telemedicine was legalized. This led to a big shift towards digital consultation and meetings.
- With National Digital Health Mission, both urban and rural India will be connected to a healthcare ecosystem. This ecosystem will also connect Doctors, pharmacies, laboratories, and patients as well. This will be a big game changer as the pharma industry will now have to engage with the entire ecosystem on digital channels and they need to be ready for this new marketing environment.
- Earlier we believed HCPs are experts and patients are passive recipients of the treatment, but now with digital channels especially Google, patients are more aware about their disease conditions. Now HCPs must be ready to face these new age patients.
- This is happening not just in India, but across the Asian countries, teleconsultation has increased 54x times in Philippines, while Singapore saw 8x increase, this proves an increase in demand for digital consultation.
- Due to this sudden digital shift, the knowledge gap between Patient and Doctor has increased, it has also increased between medical reps and Doctors and finally between pharmacists and medical reps. So, the entire pharma supply chain is experiencing a knowledge gap which must be addressed immediately, as medicine is an ever-changing science and as the time changes the techniques must change too.
- Technology has now changed how patients access medical consultation. Right from initial consultation at MBBS level to booking appointment with a specialist based on HCP rating, technology and taking healthcare closer to patients.
- The major issue of digital transformation is how the patients perceive its' usefulness, whether during consultation or giving economic benefits.
- Due to pandemic, technology adoption was faster, but as a pharma marketer we need to understand to what extent the stakeholders have adopted this technology and in the long run whether it is sustainable, also need to think how much might be reversed. Reversal of technology adoption will create space for physical model of engagement.

- Earlier medical representative would do physical call once a week or once a fortnight and used to share medical literature during that visit. But with digital shift the same medical rep is sending 30 different medical literature's 30 times a day, which led to frustration among HCP community.
- So, it is important for pharma marketer to plan on knowledge sharing exercise, some can be via digital, some part can be via physical channels and rest can be via some courses.
- According to Fred Davis, unless our stakeholders don't find perceived usefulness in the technology, they won't accept it, we might also experience reversal of adoption.
- Doctors are looking forward to getting more and more knowledge on new technologies, new molecules, new dosage form that has been globally available. In one survey where the physician says that 87% of responders say that they could have given a better outcome of the treatment if they would have access to the in-depth, knowledge about a new blockbuster drug or breakthrough innovations in their field.
- We are already aware that there is a need for knowledge update for doctors for sure. So, here the pharma company can play a major, major role so it may not be just, product or molecule-related theme.
- Sharing of scientific knowledge can be via case-based discussions, as it helps them to learn and debate.
- Offer and train doctor to conduct e-consultation with patients. The onus can be on pharma company to train doctors on how to use telemedicine application, online diagnosis and generating prescription online.
- HCPs can also automate marketing using emails or whatsapp messages to patient community along with patient education content.
- It is important that the pharma company defines the 3 C's – Define Channel, Define Content and Define Context. Defining these 3 C's will help the pharma companies to engage with HCPs based on their interest levels.
- Due to pandemic, the medical reps are also missing out on chemist audits, on understanding what is happening with our brands or the competitor brands but as a retailer segment there are lot of changes happening.
- Today a pharmacist is not just expected to dispense, but also counsel the patients. It is equally important for pharma marketers to create atleast 10% educational scientific content for pharmacist retailers. This will help the pharmacist to fulfil the prescription better by explaining or counselling with patients on impact of medicine.
- Need of the hour is how we can engage with almost 11 lakh retailer pharmacists across India in scientific knowledge marketing content.

- Pharma industry can also focus towards creating simple groups or pages on Facebook to public information related to specific disease conditions. This will help to bring Doctor and patient closer to discussion issues they are facing.
- Today patients first check HCP rating online and then book an appointment, which makes it essential for HCPs to learn and focus digital a part of patient consultation practice.
- The future is about phygital or it will be a hybrid marketing model for the niche segment, probably face-to-face and for the mass segment probably pharma companies can go for a hybrid model with telemedicine because the reach will be mass audiences.
- Pharma marketers can create apps or calculators which can be based on certain disease condition biomarkers, so once the patient enters the details, they would know whether they need to do any specific check up or visit which doctor in case the triggers are positive. This can help doctors in offering value added services along with their practice tools.
- It is critical for pharma companies to transform their medical reps into digital medical reps. A lot of content has to now go via both offline and online channels, so you need to upgrade skills of medical reps. Pharma marketers also need to create long and more touch points with HCPs, since almost 60 to 70% touch points have been transformed into digital channels.
- AI is going to play a vital role in the coming time so how a medical rep can engage the healthcare practitioner through any AI app. This integration will transform physical engagement to digital via some barcode integration or e-card chips, even the leave behind literature can have multimedia engagement on digital.
- It is also important to gamify learning for medical reps or the medical reps should be able to visualize their progress on different parameters of customer engagement.
- Many pharma companies are already creating virtual platforms where medical conferences can be conducted, utilizing the right platforms because there are many platforms right now available and most of the platforms, they are engaging the customer but need to understand what the right platform and how digital engagement is be carried out in a sustainable long-term association with the healthcare.
- Doctors are worried about privacy issues when opting for tele consultation. So pharma companies need to hand hold them, build trust and create education videos to build trust in this digital ecosystem.
- Once the DISHA act - Digital Information Security in Health Act which unfortunately because of the pandemic could not be passed. But once this act is cleared by the parliament then there will be a regulatory compliance to it and probably then we will see that entire digital health having the complete regulatory framework towards it.
- Pharma companies are the torchbearers in any change and while the discussion about understanding and addressing those needs with the digital and hybrid models but the most important thing in all these lines is that we have got to do it the right way.



# GAPSULE

## **A First of an Industry Dialogue Series**

**Aimed at Bridging the Knowledge Gap between the Pharmaceutical Industry and Medical Practitioners for Better Treatment Outcomes.**

<https://gapsule.docmode.org/>

*An initiative by*



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