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## 3 WAYS FIELD TEAMS CAN SHAPE THE MARKET BEFORE AND AFTER PRODUCT LAUNCH

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"It is not how much you have or know, or even who you know; it is how well you adapt to the inevitable changes along the way. As Heraclitus, the Greek philosopher, said, 'Change is the only constant in life.'"

In 20 years spent working with pharmaceutical field-based clinical teams and programs, I have learned how to embrace and manage change, which is not always easy in an industry steeped in complex processes, compliance and regulatory nuances, and tradition. When change does happen, the ripple effects always leave a mark on the future. For example, for Field Medical (FM) teams, the PhRMA Code on Interactions with Health Care Professionals forever changed how cross-functional collaboration internally and externally is conducted based on a product's life cycle stage.

Since then, the generation of pharmaceutical professionals who started in FM before the PhRMA Code was enacted has transitioned from an analog world to a digital one – and the momentum of the industry's innovation continues to accelerate. What will FM teams look like 20 years from now, and how is their role evolving in today's market?

Today more than ever, market shaping is becoming vital to product success. As manufacturers begin to develop market-shaping strategies, FM teams have a new opportunity to optimize stakeholder engagement, converting virtual and in-person interactions into actionable insights sooner. Here are three ways FM teams can adopt market-shaping strategies to propel the industry and manufacturers forward:

1

### Leveraging the Hybrid Field Model to Optimize Engagements

The past year has heralded a renaissance for virtual engagement platforms, revealing that pharma can still move the needle forward without routinely engaging in person — and do so more cost efficiently! Virtual engagement has quickly become a validated FM tool, not just for pandemics but for today's and tomorrow's key opinion leader (KOL) and healthcare provider (HCP) engagements. As a result, the industry has started answering two questions:

1

How much more efficiently can KOLs/HCPs adjudicate patients through telemedicine?

2

How can we optimize the reach and value of the FM engagement model?

The standard of deploying FM teams to increase and sustain share of voice is losing its footing because companies often don't invest in the right size field force for their team. In the Digital Age, field teams have an opportunity to restructure operations to efficiently leverage technology and optimize the benefits of in-person interactions.

With the increasing technological sophistication and specificity of electronic medical records (EMRs), a variety of data platforms can be leveraged to direct field strategies, measure team impact and then redirect strategies and engagement targets when needed. The question becomes: What metrics independent of traditional commercial metrics (e.g., script volume, sampling, revenue and call counts) can FM use to *quickly* establish their impact and value to clinical stakeholders?

2

### Connect the Scientific Narrative to the Right Audience With Predictive Analytics

Today's industry market demands the evolution of FM skillsets. I like to think of FM headcounts (medical science liaisons, field medical directors, clinical nurse educators, regional sales managers, etc.) as "Information Engineers," or IEs. Current FM operation models, while excellent at designing evidence-based messages, often fail to consider different audience learning styles, cultural differences and personality traits. These may be harder engagement metrics to assess, but the impact of understanding audience message reception, processing and retention is critical to product success and outreach strategies.

Through precision medicine, predictive analytics have accelerated clinical trials and the generation of new scientific insights. FM teams are your most valuable tool for conveying these insights at a commensurate pace to the right audience. With these insights, FM teams have the data needed to inform and refine research techniques, inclusion/exclusion criteria, timing of assessments and more. IEs serve as a

critical cog in this information feedback loop, as they must use consistent predictive analytics and insights to refine when and how messages are delivered to KOLs/HCPs, patients and other important stakeholders.

Using data to match the right message to the right KOL/HCP will enable “mission-critical” functional measurement quicker and with more agility. By doing so, manufacturers can better manage the efficiency of in-person and virtual engagement, which is here to stay.

### 3 Deploy “Information Engineers” Sooner to Shape the Market & Author the Narrative For Success

In my career, I have lost count of the number of missed FM opportunities due to competitor environment changes, regulatory verdicts, payer landscape shifts and other variables that sucked the wind out of a promising new drug launch.

When the complex launch and market environments are difficult to control, one thing that field teams can control is the timing of deployment. Why not deploy sooner to start the conversation and gain momentum pre-launch?

Integrating IEs into the clinical development journey not only develops their skills into a lead asset but allows FM personnel to experience the triumphs and challenges alongside investigators. Importantly, the IEs will better understand the product development of the drug and become a force multiplier for the Medical Directors and Clinical Operations functions. At this stage, IEs can gather insights on site logistic challenges and specialist turf battles hampering enrollment, assist in the profiling of sites for consideration to be onboarded or offboarded, and assess best engagement practices before the product ever hits the market.

With this deployment strategy, FM teams can begin shaping the market for the product by:

- 1 **Engineering the narrative** around a specific disease state and the scientific and clinical value around a specific intervention, and pointing out the salient clinical considerations and endpoints to consider.
- 2 **Amplifying the narrative** with a thoughtful plan around investigator meetings, scientific publications, advisory boards and scientific congress activities.
- 3 **Clarifying the narrative** with the distillation and processing of actionable insights that

influence the next wave of studies, publications, field solutions tools and content, and other medical affairs planning.

- 4 **Sustaining the narrative**, which requires ongoing clarification to optimize the IEs’ tools, techniques and tasks, with consideration of the product life cycle and transitions between stages.

For the most part, these activities are agnostic to regulatory milestones. Pharma manufacturers can scale the FM team based on the product’s life cycle stage. Rather than assessing risk tolerance and resources for FM assets as the product nears launch, manufacturers should look to IEs sooner, arguably as early as phase 2. In doing so, FM teams will be integrated into the clinical development journey longer, gaining insights to better inform market-shaping strategies pre- and post-launch.



### Next Steps for Field Teams in Market Shaping

EVERSANA is helping partners shape the market by leveraging initial FM deployment to better understand commercialization needs at every stage of the product life cycle.

Our predictive analytics and machine learning solutions, such as **ACTICS** by EVERSANA™, help optimize precision medicine in clinical development and post-approval pharmacotherapy. With this information at their fingertips, manufacturers can correctly scale FM teams while supporting the teams with digital assets that maximize the value of FM for manufacturers and stakeholders. Even smaller FM teams empowered by the right data can lead to broader outreach opportunities and enhanced message delivery and retention.

The concept of “owning” KOLs/HCPs based on location has been challenged by the COVID-19 pandemic. Today, data need to optimize the match between IE personas and KOL/HCP personas for educational outreach and message retention, through both in-person and virtual engagement. How field teams communicate internally and externally continues to evolve, while traditional, more familiar frameworks are being pressure-tested to their breaking point.

Realizing the potential of FM teams will require access to high-quality data, built-in time for planning ahead and measuring outreach impact, and a partner with decades of industry expertise. When FM teams are optimized in scale, resources and deployment strategies, these teams take on a new role and can be the hidden gem in market shaping that manufacturers have been searching for.



#### About EVERSANA™

EVERSANA is the leading provider of global commercialization services to the life sciences industry. The company’s integrated solutions are rooted in the patient experience and span all stages of the product life cycle to deliver long-term, sustainable value for patients, providers, channel partners and payers. The company serves more than 500 organizations, including innovative start-ups and established pharmaceutical companies, to advance life sciences services for a healthier world. To learn more about EVERSANA, visit [EVERSANA.COM](https://EVERSANA.COM) or connect through [LinkedIn](#) and [Twitter](#).

