

Patient HEROES

*There is a clear opportunity for pharmaceutical companies to **enhance their value** to patients by increasing awareness, and ultimately use of patient services — and to start doing **so much earlier** in the patient journey.*

3 KEY AREAS OF PATIENT ENGAGEMENT

There's still a huge opportunity for our industry to put itself in the patient's shoes and improve the patient experience in clinical trials in three key areas:

- 1. How patients find out about clinical trials.** If pharma is still purely relying on sites to invite patients to participate in clinical trials, then the industry is five years behind. Patients and their caregivers are online — they are on Google, Facebook, and Instagram — leaving breadcrumbs behind for the industry to intersect them with useful information about clinical trials.
- 2. An analysis of the patient and caregiver burden during the clinical trial.** Pharma writes protocols in a corporate conference room full of physicians. They'll write that 10 visits are required during a period of 12 months, but do they stop to consider what each visit requires from a patient and their family? Oftentimes what's required is time off from work or school, transportation to and from the site, and parking fees. What's seen as a simple 20-minute visit in a protocol can translate to half day for a patient and their caregiver. There's a need to decrease the burden of a trial on a patient.
- 3. A practical, patient-focused retention plan.** After all the effort required to enroll a patient, the last thing our industry needs is a leaky retention bucket. Aside from adverse events, patients quit clinical trials because of trial burden: the number of patient visits, the length of these visits, the number of blood draws or other disliked procedures, the time, logistics, and cost associated with attending the visits. Retention should focus on how to minimize the time, as well as the financial and emotional burden on the patient.

The definition of a hero is a person who is admired for courage, outstanding achievements, or noble qualities.

There is a massive demand for patient-engagement solutions, with predictions that the market for such solutions will reach \$30.36 billion by 2026.

Patient needs are not only supported by solutions but also by services, with an Accenture survey of 10,000 patients finding that while many ask for guidance before beginning treatment, most are not aware of services available to them.

According to the survey, patients found to be at risk of a disease are highly receptive to information at that stage, yet most pharmaceutical companies don't target patients with information until after treatment. Those patients that are aware of services value these highly, with a majority (79%) of those surveyed saying the services were very or extremely helpful. This further underscores the importance of patient engagement and providing patients with knowledge to help them with their journey.

But it takes more than hardware and software to reach patients on the most basic level. Patient engagement requires that personal touch, embodied by compassion, empathy, and a willingness to go above and beyond to make a meaningful difference for patients. As patient engagement and centrality continue to be the focus of almost everyone and every company in the life-sciences industry, those individuals and teams that are willing to put the patient at the heart of everything they do are heroes not only to the patients they serve but to the community at large. We are happy to showcase a few of the patient heroes — although they say the real heroes are patients — who are making a difference. ■

Source: Accenture