Analysis and recommendation of virtual medical information for scientific meetings

Bevilacqua A.1 Xanthos H.1 Hermes-DeSantis E2
1Eisai Inc., Woodcliff Lake, New Jersey USA
2Emest Mario School of Pharmacy, Rutgers University, Piscataway, New Jersey USA

BACKGROUND

Many of the top pharmaceutical companies have undergone cost-containment or restructuring in recent years. From a Medical Information (MI) department perspective, the use of virtual medical information* may be a viable option to offset expenses associated with personnel attendance at medical meetings.

OBJECTIVE

To provide a benchmarking analysis of the utilization of virtual MI technology by pharmaceutical/non-pharmaceutical companies at scientific meetings.

METHODS

A web-based survey was sent via electronic mail (e-mail) to 30 pharmaceutical companies across the U.S.
- Survey was to be answered by a representative in MI
- Only one response per company was allowed
- The survey consisted of a total of 29 questions; the number of questions posed depended on participants’ previous answers
- Survey questions were either multiple choice or open-ended responses
- Study administrator remained blinded throughout the study and results remained anonymous at the end of the study
- Data were collected from December 2010 to January 2011

DEMOGRAPHICS

Of the companies surveyed, 53% (16/30) responded to the survey
- 15 (50%) respondents completed the full survey
- 1 (7%) respondent partially completed the survey
- 100% (16) of the surveyed companies have brand name pharmaceuticals with 44% (7/16) of respondents’ MI departments supporting more than 20 products

RESULTS (Continued)

Figure 1: Meetings Attended by Medical Information in 2010

- Excluding fielding-based MSLS, 68% (11/16) of respondents indicated the company sends less than 2 full-time equivalents (FTE) from home-office based MI to staff company booths at scientific meetings.
- Figure 1 shows the approximate number of scientific meetings attended by company MI Departments in 2010

Figure 2: Current Use of Virtual Medical Information

- Respondents were asked to provide an approximate number.
- Two respondents indicated number of meetings attended will trend downward in 2011.

Figure 3: Perceived Challenges†

- Respondents who either are not currently using or are not considering use in the future (10/16)
- Respondents in “Other” included:
  - “Impersonal communication”
  - Regulatory Requirements
  - Healthcare provider (HCP) adoption

Figure 4: Meeting Criteria

- 67% (2/3) of respondents employ virtual MI at between 1-3 meetings a year
- 63% (10/16) of respondents indicated it took between 6-12 months to implement this type of communication platform
- Overall, 63% (10/16) of respondents feel that virtual MI/communication platforms may be useful to disseminate medical information to HCPs

LIMITATIONS

- Small sample size due to only 16 out of 30 companies responding to survey and only 3 out of 16 currently using this technology
- Data capture did not report meeting attendance in previous years/quarters
- Results were self-reported and may not be accurate because the benchmarking tool utilized to evaluate the respondents surveyed has not been validated

CONCLUSIONS

Today, the role of the MI professional within the pharmaceutical industry will continue to evolve as technology advances. In the advent of social media initiatives such as Facebook© and Twitter©, technology to communicate with healthcare professionals around the world will create instant flexibility and personalization for users to share medical information seamlessly. Additionally, pharmaceutical companies have the opportunity to enter into technological innovations implemented at industry booths. The technology should be implemented to ensure brand name pharmaceuticals will maintain compliance and adhere to the changing regulatory landscape. The results of this study indicate that although virtual medical information technology has not been widely adopted as of yet, its role is evolving and may play a greater role in the future.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS/DISCLOSURES

The authors would like to recognize the following individuals for their contribution to the development of this poster: Ann Hida

Authors of this presentation have the following to disclose concerning possible financial or personal relationships with commercial entities that may have a direct or indirect interest in the subject matter of this presentation:

Anthony Bevilacqua: Nothing to disclose
Harris Xanthos: Nothing to disclose
Evelyn Hermes-DeSantis: Nothing to disclose