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Coaching Guide Incorporating Patient Profiles Into Sales Conversations

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Section 2

Storytelling Through Patient Profiles

Success story

Storytelling theory

A customer I visit sought me out in the hallway to talk about a life-changing impact my product, Superion, had on one of her patients, whom she had seen the day before...

A 32-year old male, once a successful builder, happily married and a father to a 6-year-old son, had started seeing a doctor I visited about 8 months prior. This patient had recently suffered the unthinkable tragedy—losing his son in a car accident. Soon after, his marriage began to fall apart, and his wife walked out on him. The inescapable grief, anxiety and pain was too much for him to face and go to work every day. He was eventually let go from his job of 10 years. Here is where this patient first came to visit the doctor.

Everyone in the clinic knew when he was in the waiting room from the tap, tap, tap sound. He would sit in the chair next to the door always wearing a backpack with his son's picture plastered across the back of it. He would rock back and forth and tap his hiking boot-clad feet on the concrete floors in the clinic. Rock, rock, rock, and tap, tap, tap. It was always the same every time he came to the office.

Thought-provoking questions

The storytelling arc on slide 18 was displayed in the eModule after the success story. Sales representatives were asked to consider their answers to these questions and note them down. You may wish to recap and discuss these questions and answers.

- How do you feel having listened to the story?
- How does it make you feel about your role?
- What ideas does it give you about the story you are telling during sales calls?
- Do you already have a story from your own experience that you could reflect on and talk about during sales calls?

Section 3

Short Sales Calls

Short sales calls exercise

Short (2-5 minute) sales calls were identified as being the biggest challenge to sales representatives in using patient profiles (as shown in the field team survey).

Evidence supports that when executed well, an engaging needs-based plan for these calls will often earn you additional minutes with your customer.

Learning from the eModule: Sales representatives saw a screen full of tips from their international peers on how best to approach short conversations (see slides 28 and 29).

Next steps for you as a Coach:

Step 1: Ask your sales representatives to complete the reflection sheet on slide 27 in order to capture their learnings on how best to approach these short sales calls.

Take note of the fourth question and what the sales representatives say they will take forward in their role; you can follow-up on this in future.

Step 2: Spend time with each sales representative supporting them in identifying the key messages from their full dialogue (built as part of the previous exercise) that need to come through in short conversations.

Step 3: Support the sales representatives in creating a ‘tips sheet’ for short conversations which combines the tips and key points they would like to use.

Build a common tip sheet for your sales team. This allows you to share the tips across your geography.

You may wish to maintain a copy of this tips sheet to reflect on with the sales representatives at later dates.

High-impact short conversations

What tips for short sales calls resonated the most?

What have you applied to short conversations in the field so far?

What has worked/not worked during short conversations?

What will you take forward for future short calls?

Tips for short sales calls

The below are tips shared in the eModule from international peers. You should expect to see some of these tips on the 'High impact short conversations' sheet submitted by sales representatives.

Show empathy for the customer
Communication is much more effective if delivered with empathy. Taking the time to check-in with the customer about their day and context may support how you deliver your messages and where your focus should be.

Juan Carlos Licona

Highlight key benefits to the patient
Keep the focus of short conversations on the patient (not the data)

John Raaby

Have a plan if you know the physician; focus on one key thing.

Marcelo Pereira

Open with the patient profile; 'Have you used XX? Let me quickly give you an example of a patient case.'
This is the type of patient your colleagues have found to be appropriate for this product

Halle Leonard

Tips for short sales calls *(continued)*

‘Two minutes is just enough time to speak to the customer about the patient they are about to see!’
If you are able to focus the conversation on the patient your customer is just about to see, or a patient sitting in their waiting room, you can immediately draw a connection for the customer. They may apply your messages directly to that patient the same day and your conversation will be front of mind during clinic.

Seth Rosenberg

‘Within a follow-up visit, follow the progress of a patient discussed as a reason to check back in with the customer’
If you can focus your conversation on a patient profile, and allow the customer to link the profile to a particular patient in their clinic, you can then make a note to follow-up on the progress of this patient on future visits to the practice (whether or not your are scheduled to meet this customer, you are prepared for a conversation in the hallway). Whether or not the customer prescribed your product for that patient, their progress (or lack of progress) will provide insight to the customer and may create space for your product.

Karim Fayed

‘Try and move the needle one step; just make progress!’
Set a realistic expectation from this short interaction and aim to make progress with the customer. While a commitment to prescribe is ideal, progress would be an agreement to a longer conversation for instance.

Seth Rosenberg

Success story recap
Short conversations

Patient profiles are the voice of the patient, and when we get the patient right, we can offer the right solutions. This makes patient profiles INVALUABLE.

A new nurse who joined a busy practice last year had given me a 5-minute appointment with just him. He had come from a busy behavioural health clinic and was a newer nurse so he had only very limited experience with branded medications.

I set up the call by saying I wanted to talk to him about two different patients. After concluding my P1 call which took the 5 minutes, I said, 'Now I want to talk to you about a different patient… who is truly struggling'. He was now in a hurry and clearly short on time but when I introduced the P2 patient profile, it instantly resonated with him and it stopped him in his tracks. The profile opened the door for a very impactful conversation and I was given a little extra time to cover with the detail piece.

The nurse said 'I always hate having to jump from one sales call to another and this patient you mention is so common in our clinic, with the anxiety piece making it even more difficult…I finally have a great option for this patient.'

It was incredible. He said he would be utilising our product THAT DAY.

This is why I do what I do. It made me so proud that he now had an option to help these specific patients, and the outcome only happened because of the clear and effective patient profile.

He has shared several positive outcomes since that day.

Story submitted by Chuck Rosenbergen

Section 4

Preparing for an Upcoming Sales Call

Q1 Q2 Q3 **Q4**

Your upcoming sales call

Exercise** sales representatives **learned of during eModule:

Take a moment to consider an upcoming sales call you have planned. Consider anything you know about this customer, where in the prescribing cycle they are and how long you are likely to have to discuss your product within your next visit.

Write some notes on how you will approach that visit as a result of this training, and if you are able to, discuss these with your in-field manager in advance of the visit.

Next steps for you as a Coach:

Step 1: Contact your sales representatives and remind them of the above exercise. Ask them to write out a plan for the call including:

- Notes about the customer
- Where in the adoption/prescribing cycle the customer is
- How long they are likely to have to discuss your product
- What the focus/approach will be if your time is cut short

Step 2: Review the plan with each sales representative and consider the following for your feedback:

- Are all of the above points addressed in the plan?
- Is the plan consistent with learnings from previous exercises?
    - Training outcomes exercise
    - Building your product story
    - High-impact short conversations