



## Putting the Patient at the Center of the Pharmaceutical Supply Chain

*(Source: An article by D. L. Buss for Supply & Demand Chain Executive)*

Now more than ever, the pharmaceutical supply chain needs special care and attention, particularly with so much at stake. The patient relies heavily on prescription drugs and the industry has stringent regulatory requirements that must be met.

This puts an incredible amount of responsibility on the pharmaceutical supply chain. These critical medications and supplies must be transported swiftly, safely, and frequently within a required temperature range so that the efficacy of these drugs can be ensured. All of this must be done while meeting regulatory requirements and to the satisfaction of the demands of patients and their providers. These requirements can also vary greatly from country to country, complicated by challenges with cold storage infrastructure and unanticipated delivery delays.

The earliest definition of patient centricity was put forth by AstraZeneca, patients and caregivers and was defined as putting the patient first in an open engagement to respectfully and compassionately achieve the best experience and outcome for that person and their family. Subsequently, the collaborative effort identified five values that are important to patients seeking to have control of their own health: inclusiveness; sharing goals that are patient- and family-centric; empowering patients; showing respect, compassion and openness; and, partnering.

Pharmaceutical companies must focus on delivery products to better provide meaningful and impactful experiences. Essentially this means using common language and keeping patients included in the process from the start. Providers and pharmaceutical companies need to work with patients to develop solutions that are mutually agreeable.

Like most other industries, the customer – or in this case, the patient - is the focus. There are a number of factors that contribute to this new demand for patient-focused pharmaceutical supply chains.

One of these factors is technology. Advanced technologies drive patient centricity. Because patients have better access to information, they are more knowledgeable and are more active in participating in their own healthcare. Enhanced communications among patients, advocacy groups, and pharmaceutical companies allow their voices to be heard like never before. Additionally, technologies, such as advanced analytics and artificial intelligence, are allowing for data sets that can improve clinical studies and their outcomes, along with pharmaceutical design.

Another factor is patient control, which is quickly gaining recognition within the pharmaceutical industry. Through patient control, pharma companies acknowledge if they intend to create medications that improve or extend the lives of patients, then

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## In Brief...

- ♦ **Walgreens** announced two key leadership appointments. *Anita Patel* will be joining Walgreens in the newly created role of Vice President, Pharmacy Services Development, and *Rina Shah* will serve in a newly created role of Vice President, Pharmacy of the Future and Healthcare Segments. Separately, Walgreens has been named *2021 Retailer of the Year* by Drug Store News. Alongside its strengthened omnichannel infrastructure, Walgreens has worked tirelessly to build constantly relevant selections within its stores and has been instrumental in assisting its customers with PPEs, immunization and COVID-19 testing during the pandemic.
- ♦ **AmerisourceBergen (ABC)** launched *Clinical Trial Navigator*, a solutions suite that assists with biopharmaceutical clinical trial recruitment within community-based specialty practices. Leveraging ABC's robust research community, **AdvanceIQ Network**, *Clinical Trial Navigator* unites oncology practices and their patients with trials through digital site selection, patient identification and enrollment tools.
- ♦ **The IFRS Foundation's International Accounting Standards Board (IASB)** and **International Sustainability**

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## Sigma Healthcare Joins IFPW

IFPW is pleased to announce that Sigma Healthcare (Australia) has joined IFPW as a wholesale member organization.

Since 1912, Sigma Healthcare has been supporting the health of Australians. As a leading full line wholesale and distribution business, its distribution centers in each state service the breadth of Australia; ensuring essential medicines reach those who need them, when they need them, no matter where they live in Australia. Their recently completed infrastructure investment program ensures Sigma has the latest technology and automation solutions to provide efficient and effective service to its customers, moving hundreds of millions of units or medicines every year, with capacity for growth, and servicing its own pharmacy network, with over 1,200 aligned pharmacy members.

Sigma maintains a community focus and is committed to operating sustainably in all its forms, delivering pharmaceutical and healthcare products to a wide range of customers, including community and hospital pharmacies, aged care facilities, government and allied health facilities.

IFPW welcomes Sigma and looks forward to the Sigma team's insights and perspectives as a respected player in the global pharmaceutical wholesale industry.

## Patient (cont.)...

patients should have a say in how those medications are delivered. Pharmaceutical companies can no longer patently choose what is best for the patient without patient input.

In the traditional view, the patient has always been at the end of the supply chain. In the patient-centric view, the supply chain begins and ends with the patient, dictated by the increasing demand for personalized medicine and new, highly individualized therapies. Patients need their medications delivered to them, at the time they need them and in ways that are convenient for them to use. These medications must also be cost-effective, requiring visibility and transparency across the supply chain.

While globalization of supply chains has historically created obstacles for this goal, it also improves the possibility for end-to-end transparency. Cloud-based management solutions are helping with adaptive management and responsiveness, which digital technologies aid in cold-chain shipment monitoring and in-home collection of samples.

A patient-centric supply chain requires a lot of upfront effort and a shift in the manner in which pharmaceutical companies and logistics companies manage them. Patients and the medications they need are diverse. Frequently these medications require specialized transportation such as controlled temperature zones and coolers and ports and airports for storage. Additionally, both patients and healthcare providers have different demands and expectations. It is critical for pharma companies to work closely with pharma distributors and 3PL providers to provide the needed infrastructure and transportation network to ensure the end-to-end safety and security of the supply chain.

Adding further challenges are the varying regulatory requirements from the point of origin to destination. Pharmaceutical companies must always consider local, state, federal and individual country's regulatory requirements.

The best-laid plans still require exceptional contingency planning as a course of preparedness in the case of significant future events or situations that cause disruption to the supply chain. This may include previously unanticipated natural disasters or manufacturing delays. A solid contingency plan can effectively navigate these situations and minimize disruptions.

Patient-centric supply chains are about more than meeting consumer demand – it is about protecting patient lives. Medications have significant impact on patient quality of life, and their care and transportation should reflect that. Being adaptable while always keeping the patient at the center of the process should be the paramount concern for every participant in the pharmaceutical supply chain.

## Shanghai Manufacturing Sees Significant Declines in April

(Source: An article by Brian Young for Scrip Intelligence)

According to the latest reports from Shanghai, China's pharmaceutical industry epicenter, outputs of its operations in the sector declined in April, largely due to the strict lockdowns imposed in the city since late March.

Two months later, Shanghai is preparing to reopen but this may take much longer. Data released by the Shanghai Municipal Government show that compared to the same month in 2021, pharma manufacturing output from "enterprises with scale" dropped 45% overall. Pharma sector output in the first three months was down by 14% compared to the same period of 2021.

The steepest decline was among foreign-owned operations, down 70%, compared to the same period last year. This includes all state- or privately-held or foreign-, Hong Kong- or Taiwan-owned enterprises outside the pharma industry. Commercial activities in Shanghai also suffered a steep decline.

While the government has set June 1st as the target date for the city's reopening, the process is expected to be gradual, given that restarting a huge city of 25 million people for a return to normalcy will take time.

Shanghai is China's main pharma industry hub and the location for many multinationals' regional headquarters. Large domestic drug makers, including, Shanghai Fosun Pharmaceutical (Group) Co., Ltd. And Jiangsu Hengrui Medicine Co., Ltd. Also have a large R&D and commercial operations in the city, and the Zhangjiang Hitech Park is home to many emerging innovative bioventures.

While the U.S. is considering lower tariffs on Chinese goods to counter surging inflation, China itself has seen continued sluggish demand as certain regions continue to concentrate on fending off the Omicron infection wave and implementing strict countermeasures.

Continued frustration with the situation has negatively impacted the perceptions of foreign business in China. Recent U.S. approval rejections of several "Made In China" innovative new drugs, complicated by China's hesitation to ease its own border restrictions, suggest opportunities for collaboration and agreement between the two countries continues to be challenging.

## In Brief (cont.)...

**Standards Board (ISSB)** announced plans for the two boards to work together to agree on how to build and integrate the *Integrated Reporting Framework* into their standard setting projects and requirements, including joint projects undertaken by the IASB and the ISSB to evolve and enhance the *Integrated Reporting Framework*, resulting in the publication of materials applicable to both Boards. The Chairs have committed to a long-term role for a corporate reporting framework, incorporating principles and concepts from the current *Integrated Reporting Framework*. On consolidation of the **Value Reporting Foundation**, the IASB and the ISSB will assume responsibility for the *Integrated Reporting Framework*.

- ◆ **GlaxoSmithKline** will rebrand itself as **GSK**. The move comes as new direction toward "simplicity". The company will also work to slim down its organization with its consumer business to be decoupled and known as **Haleon**, which will be the largest London listing of a company in more than a decade.

- ◆ Japan has passed into law an economic security bill that would reinforce supply chain for key resources essential to people's lives and economic activities, such as pharmaceuticals and semiconductors. The government will now move to designate these resources through a Cabinet order. The law is aimed at creating a more resilient supply chain, ensuring the security and reliability of key infrastructures, and promoting public-private technical cooperation. It will also make key patent applications closed to the public.

(Sources: Company Press Releases, Drug Store News, FiercePharma, Scrip Intelligence and World Pharma News)