

# Pull-through capabilities: Communicating effectively with prescribers about cost and coverage



Making prescribers aware of a brand drug's cost and coverage landscape can pose a challenge for a variety of reasons:

- A prescriber's time is limited.
- Prescription drug coverage can be complicated and confusing.
- Insurance coverage and dominant health plans differ by geography.
- Bad prescribing experiences are more memorable than good experiences.

Pull-through efforts that provide prescribers with only high-level information fail to address these challenges. Succinct, targeted communications that are specific to a geographic area of practice can enable prescribers to provide cost-effective therapies to patients in need.

**Milliman has developed a five-step process to establish a pull-through capability that informs prescribing decisions:**

- 1 Research prescriber perceptions:** Find out what prescribers believe about the brand
- 2 Map cost and coverage landscapes:** Identify geographies where misconceptions influence prescribing habits
- 3 Develop a local message library:** Translate findings into strategy and tactics
- 4 Implement a communication plan:** Make it easy for representatives to deliver a consistent message
- 5 Understand results:** Measure success across multiple dimensions

Milliman can implement all five steps to develop a customized communication strategy from the ground up, or integrate with your existing operations to enhance pull-through capabilities.

## 1 RESEARCH PRESCRIBER PERCEPTIONS: FIND OUT WHAT PRESCRIBERS BELIEVE ABOUT THE BRAND

Prescribers are busy. When they think about prescription drugs, they may think about efficacy, interactions, and side effects. They are aware of patient copays and barriers to prescribing, but they seldom have an accurate idea of the cost to a specific patient.

Develop a survey to ask prescribers about their perceptions of cost and coverage for the brand, both good and bad. Get as much context as the prescribers are willing to share.

Ask about costs across insurance populations, including commercially insured patients, Medicare Part D patients, Medicaid patients, and dual eligibles.

The resulting insights can be used to understand the perceptions that drive prescribing decisions specific to your brand.

Research prescriber perceptions if any of the following apply:

- Performance of your brand in the market is lower than expected considering overall product access
- Sales representatives report access misconceptions among prescribers
- You are developing a pull-through strategy

## 2 MAP COST AND COVERAGE LANDSCAPES: IDENTIFY GEOGRAPHIES WHERE MISCONCEPTIONS INFLUENCE PRESCRIBING HABITS

Insurance coverage varies with things like geography, age, and demographics. Similarly, cost and coverage for the brand is also likely to change with these factors.

Develop a cost and coverage landscape to identify the areas of the market where your brand has an unrealized opportunity. Repeat the analysis across multiple geographies and insurance types to provide the foundation for a strong pull-through capability.

Use cost and coverage landscapes to assess the accuracy of prescriber perceptions.

Map cost and coverage landscapes if any of the following apply:

- Your brand has experienced recent coverage improvements
- Research suggests negative beliefs about brand access
- There is a significant disconnect between access and market share performance

## 3 DEVELOP A LOCAL MESSAGE LIBRARY: TRANSLATE YOUR FINDINGS INTO STRATEGY AND TACTIC

Armed with the knowledge of how and why prescribers make decisions, your brand should develop a strategy to close the perception gaps that most affect market share.

From a tactical perspective, misperceptions must be addressed with locally accurate information delivered to individual prescribers.

Develop messages with content relevant to a large proportion of a prescriber's patient population. Focus talking points on scenarios with low patient cost sharing and an absence of restrictions. Develop messages with place holders for variable content as cost and coverage landscapes will vary by prescriber and geography.

Create a dynamic message library that includes the structure to enable consistent messaging across the sales force and the flexibility to address different opportunities aligned to the brand strategy.

In the end, each prescriber should receive a customized message that reflects their patient population and their local access landscape.

Develop a local message library if any of the following apply:

- State and national messages fail to resonate with prescribers
- Brand opportunities vary across region, channel, and prescriber practices
- Sales representatives lack sufficient information to deliver cost and coverage messages on their own
- The clinical message alone fails to compel action

## 4 IMPLEMENT A COMMUNICATION PLAN: MAKE IT EASY FOR REPRESENTATIVES TO DELIVER A CONSISTENT MESSAGE

The best strategy is only as good as its implementation plan. To help representatives embrace your strategy and integrate it seamlessly into your existing sales process, implement a messaging plan that:

- Includes pre-call planning to help representatives understand cost and coverage access landscapes
- Complements clinical messages and other existing collateral in the sales representative tool kit
- Highlights the opportunity to engage prescribers about new, locally relevant information
- Delivers a package of messages rather than only one, enabling multiple cost and coverage discussions
- Enables multi-channel use through a flexible platform and delivery medium

Implement a communication plan if any of the following apply:

- Cost and coverage landscapes are not included in pre-call planning
- Dynamic, local messages are a new tool for the sales force
- Representatives currently use messages that only show one plan at a time
- Consistent messaging across marketing channels is a priority

The access landscape changes constantly, and the efforts described here must be ongoing. By putting these processes into practice, your organization can maintain relevance in the minds of prescribers.

A long-term communication strategy, paired with effective pull-through and thoughtful contracting, can position a company not only as a producer of product but also as a partner in providing cost-effective care to the patients that need it most.

## 5 UNDERSTAND RESULTS: MEASURE SUCCESS ACROSS MULTIPLE DIMENSIONS

Once the strategy is implemented, your organization needs to understand its business impact. We recommend measuring and monitoring success across three dimensions:

**Direct impact.** Cost and coverage messages may result in market share changes at the prescriber level for a specific type of insurance coverage (e.g., commercial insurance). Compare changes in market share for prescribers who received messages versus prescribers who did not receive messages, controlling for baseline access.

**Channel spillover.** Impactful messages may create a paradigm shift in perceptions of access across an entire patient population regardless of insurance type. Monitor the increase in prescriber market share in insurance channels where a prescriber has not received a message.

**Prescriber perceptions.** Access is an investment. To realize the value of that investment, prescribers must identify your brand as a cost effective option for treating patients that need therapy. Leverage market research techniques to monitor perceptions of your brand and your company over time.



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