Poster 40

Understanding industry perspectives versus patient preferences on patient-centric medical communication information in China

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KEY FINDINGS: INDUSTRY SURVEY

- **95%** believed industry-developed patient-centric medical communication information is important
- Only **19%** actively developed such materials
- Key barriers included **limited patient engagement** and **understanding of needs**
- "Latest clinical research" **(47%)** was the most common topic being developed for patient communication
- Challenges included: using **plain language** and **tailoring content for patient comprehension**
- Recommendations included more **graphical content** and **patient involvement** in development
- The largest difference can be seen with industry-developed subject matter versus patient preferences in "Management and treatment of side effects" **(45% vs 7%)**
- The largest difference can be seen in platforms used by industry to reach patients versus patient preferences in "Mobile health apps" **(21% vs 47%)**

WHY DOES THIS RESEARCH MATTER?

Lawrence Law, Scientific Manager at Parexel, explains why the results from Parexel's survey are important for the patient community in China. Scan the QR code above to listen to his perspectives and view additional information.

INTRODUCTION

The unmet need

- Globally, there has been a recent digital shift in patient communication approaches within the pharmaceutical industry.[1]
- However, little is known about industry-developed, patient-centered approaches in China, despite evidence that patients actively seek such information. A cross-sectional study in Zhejiang Province found that 78% of urban adult patients searched for "medical information" online.[2]
- Understanding industry perspectives versus patient preferences on medical communication information is crucial to tailor content to patient needs.
- This survey aimed to gather industry professionals' perspectives and compare them with a previous patient survey,[3] identifying potential gaps between industry efforts and patient expectations in China's medical communication landscape.

METHODS

Study design and respondents

- This was a cross-sectional, internet-based survey of industry professionals from China, specializing in various therapeutic areas and departments.
  - The questionnaire consisted of 11 questions, and included multiple-choice, Likert scale, and open-ended responses.
- No ethical approval was required as no identifiable personal information was collected.

Survey development and rollout

- The survey questions were developed by the authors based on their experience as medical communication/publication professionals.
- The survey was hosted on the Chinese Medical Affairs Conference (CMAC) (http://chinacmac.com/) platform, and disseminated to society members from the pharmaceutical industry.
- Responses were collected between November 14, 2024, and December 16, 2024.

Statistical analysis

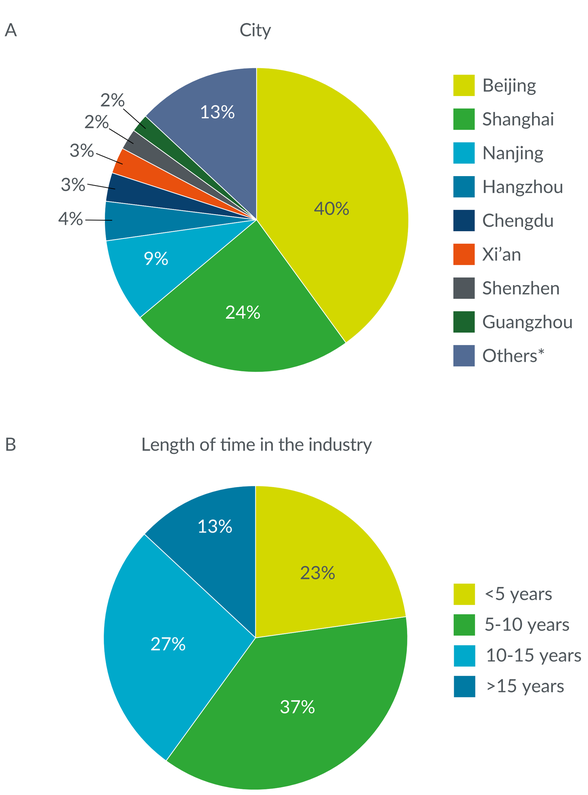
- Completed surveys were included in the data analysis.
- The survey findings were summarized descriptively as percentages (n/N), and rounded to whole numbers.

RESULTS

Respondent characteristics

- A total of 322 responses were received, all of which were included in the analysis.
- Most of the respondents lived in Beijing (40%; n=129), Shanghai (24%; n=76), and Nanjing (9%; n=30) (**Figure 1A**).
- Most of the respondents have worked in the industry for 5-10 years (37%; n=119) and 10-15 years (27%; n=88) (**Figure 1B**).
- The majority reported working in medical affairs (56%; n=182), research and development (22%; n=70), and marketing (7%; n=21) and being involved in oncology (61%; n=198), hematology (17%; n=55), or gynecology (8%; n=26).

Figure 1. Baseline demographics (A) by city and (B) length of time in the industry (N=322)

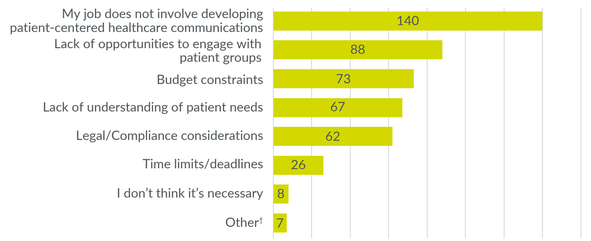


* Includes Zhengzhou (n=7), Suzhou (n=7), Chongqing (n=6), Tianjin (n=5), Hefei (n=5), Harbin (n=3), Wuhan (n=3), Hong Kong (n=2), Xuzhou (n=2), Changsha (n=1), Hainan (n=1), Changchun (n=1).

Importance of developing patient-centric medical communication information

- 95% (n=305) of survey respondents believed industry-developed patient-centric medical communication information to be important; this aligned with the patient survey (N=300), where 95% of patients actively sought medical information.[3]
- Most of the industry survey respondents (81%; n=247) reported that they neither currently develop nor have previously developed such materials in their current role.
  - Among those who did not consider it important (n=17), the reasons provided included "this has been done by a medical professional" (n=8), "sufficient materials developed by non-pharma groups" (n=5), and "patients may not be interested in them" (n=2).
  - Common reasons for not developing these materials included "job does not involve developing patient-centered healthcare communications" (n=140), "lack of opportunities to engage with patient groups" (n=88), "budget constraints" (n=73) (**Figure 2**).

Figure 2. Common barriers to developing patient-centered healthcare communication materials*

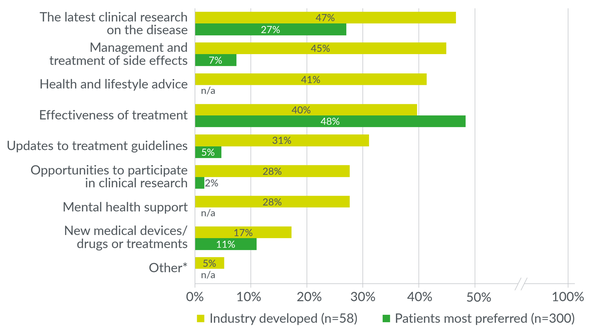


*There were a total of 264 respondents and they could choose more than one response. †Other includes (all n=1): the patients' educational levels vary, and some of them have poor health literacy (do not understand any science); poor health literacy (do not understand any science); limited by education level, anti-intellectual, and unable to communicate; patients cannot understand science; difficulty communicating science to the patients; unable to communicate, low education level, unable to understand; poor health literacy.

Developing patient-centered healthcare communications

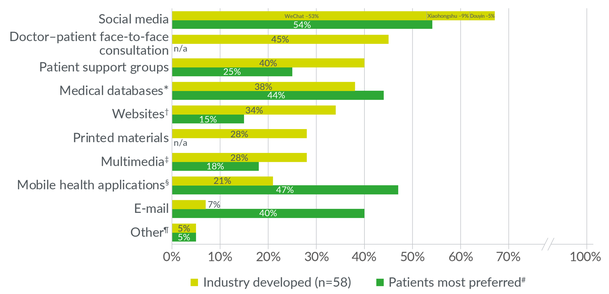
- Among those who developed patient-centered healthcare communications (n=58), the most common subject matter was "latest clinical research on the disease" (47%; n=27), followed by "management and treatment of side effects" (45%; n=26), "health and lifestyle advice" (41%; n=24), and "effectiveness of treatment" (40%; n=23) (**Figure 3**).
- In contrast, in our earlier patient survey (N=300), patients would most prefer to receive information on the "effectiveness of treatment" (48%; n=145), followed by "latest clinical research about the disease" (27%; n=81).[3]
- Common type of materials included those that target "patient education" (n=23), "popular science" (n=7), and "patient apps" (n=5).
- Common methods used to reach patients included WeChat (53%; n=31), doctor–patient face-to-face consultation (45%; n=26), patient support groups (40%; n=23), and medical databases (38%; n=22) (**Figure 4**).
- In our patient survey, social media (54%; n=111), mobile health apps (47%; n=75), and medical publication platforms/medical databases (44%; n=46) were the most preferred channels to receive updated medical content, while printed materials were least preferred.[3]

Figure 3. Common patient-centered subject matter developed by industry versus patient preference



*Estimated medical insurance and out-of-pocket costs for drugs, queries on the type of drugs that are reimbursed, reimbursed medications. Note: "Health and lifestyle advice" and "Mental health support" were not options in the patient survey.

Figure 4. Platforms used by the industry to reach patients versus patient preference

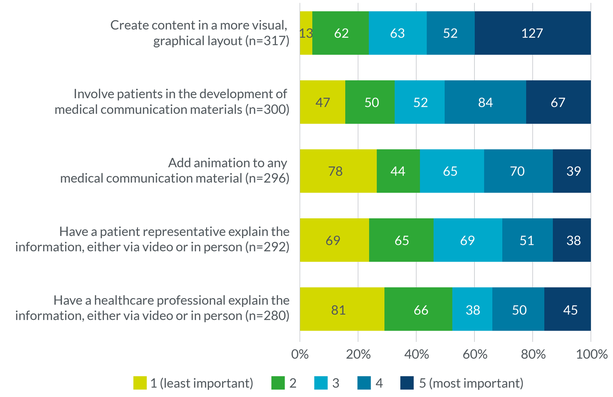


*China Medical Literature Database, China National Knowledge Infrastructure, Information/China Science and Technology Periodical Database (Traditional Chinese Medicine Literature Database), Wanfang Data; †Hospital and pharma websites; ‡Educational webinars, videos; §Good Doctor, Ping An Good Doctor; ¶Pharma survey: Weibo, KuaiShou; patient survey: blogs; #Patient survey respondents: Social media (n=205), patient support groups (n=72), medical databases (n=105), websites (n=121), printed materials (n=15), multimedia (n=83), mobile health applications (n=159), email (n=40), other (n=22).
Note: "Doctor–patient face-to-face consultation" was not an option in the patient survey.

Challenges and opportunities to developing patient-centered medical communication information

- Key challenges that the respondents faced when developing patient-centered medical communication information included "compliance and regulatory issues," "using plain language," "tailoring content for patient comprehension," "varying levels of patient understanding and receptiveness of materials developed by the industry," and "limited communication channels and reach."
- A large proportion of respondents considered creating content in a more graphical layout (40%; n=127) and involving patients in the development of medical communication materials (22%; n=67) as most important (**Figure 5**).

Figure 5. Factors most important to help patients understand the information they receive



Limitations

- This survey was conducted in China; therefore, the results may not be generalizable to other populations.
- Subgroup analyses were not reported because of the small sample size.

CONCLUSIONS

- **Industry recognizes the importance of developing patient-centric medical communication information; however, most are not developing it.**
- **Limited patient engagement and understanding of patient needs reveal a gap between industry practices and patient expectations.**
- **Among those who had developed materials, common topics included clinical research updates, side-effect management, and treatment effectiveness.**
- **Compared with the previous patient survey, there is some misalignment with patient preferences for content and communication channels.[3]**
- **Aligning industry efforts with patient preferences and engaging with patient groups could help to increase awareness of patient needs.**
- **Patient comprehension could be improved by creating more visual/graphical content and involving patients in the development of medical communication materials.**

DISCLOSURES

Lawrence Law, Charli Dowsett, and David Wang are employees of Parexel International.

Melanie Smith was employed by Parexel International at the time of our abstract submission.

Danni Shi is an employee of Pfizer, China.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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