

WHITE PAPER

# Medical Information Outsourcing

The Life sciences and Healthcare industry operates within a rapidly changing environment which makes flexibility and responsiveness an essential feature of any successful outsourcing initiative. Thanks to the cost savings, medical outsourcing is gaining a lot of importance and has become an established part of doing business.

Healthcare providers, insurance companies pharmaceutical companies and healthcare IT companies have high outsourcing needs, since many tasks can be carried out with superior quality for much less money . This trend will to continue to grow as healthcare industry groups search for ways to mitigate high healthcare costs.

## Why Outsource?

Outsourcing has helped to make organizations more efficient, scalable and profitable by adding technology solutions and skilled human resources cost-effectively.

The Medical industry is impacted by advances in information technology in major ways, since some tasks can be outsourced using inexpensive communications technology. Detailed medical analysis can now be analyzed in acceptable periods of time.

Medical expertise can be also made available on a global scale without the need to physical presence and thereby improve cost effectiveness.

- Minimize the process delays, and mistakes, when the volume of requests grows larger than in-house staff can handle and when quality may be called into question.
- Reduce the regulatory compliance risk associated with HIPAA and state regulations, which deepen the complexity of handling medical records.
- Lower operational costs by not having to factor in new or upgraded technology, staff training, staff turnover, and other facets involved with medical information release.
- Limit the liability exposure by working with a well-trained outsource company who understands the special sensitivities of this field.
- Increase the productivity; enhance the quality and customer satisfaction by transitioning to more sophisticated electronic solutions that provide better security mechanisms as well.

## The Best Outsource Partner

When selecting an outsource partner, it's important to focus on few criteria before committing to one:

- Look for a partner that is scalable so they can continue to deliver top-notch service as your business and patient base expands.
- Seek a full-service; value added provider rather than one that simply offers partial coverage.
- Compare costs for such a service. The best outsource partner will work closely with you to provide a service package that meets your unique needs at a fee that fits within your budget.
- Examine the type of technology used for storage, security, transmission, tracking and metrics to guarantee the highest level of security, quality and reliability.
- Pick a company that helps eliminate the need for multiple document management vendor relationships by offering a comprehensive and flexible solution.

## Medical Outsourcing Advantages

The quality of a medical outsourcing service depends on the sustained effort of all the parties involved – the clients, call center, and the customers. As the healthcare call centers primarily address the concerns of the patients, their role in offering a quality service is of paramount importance.

- Cost Effectiveness
- Expertise across different therapeutic areas
- Quality focus
- Customer Focus
- Services with 24/7/365 response

Pharmaceutical companies vary in their decision to stay in-house versus outsourcing medical information and in how much to spend on support for brands. The deciding factors most often come down to the relative size of the brand in question and on executive preferences about investment based on the lifecycle of the brand.

A majority of companies now use a combination strategy. The general rule of thumb is that internal call centers support emerging and newly launched products, while outsourced contact centers take calls for mature products.

## Medical Information System

Quality is the key when it comes to outsourcing Medical Information and the quality processes ensure compliance with the pharmaceutical industry's expectations and requirements. The Services provider should be regularly audited by its clients with consistently positive outcomes and no significant findings.

Telephone and written enquiries on medicines and devices from healthcare professionals and the general public fall under the Medical Information Services. It is very important to have a balance between technical accuracy, positive customer interaction, and service affordability.

### Options for Outsourcing

Medical Information enquiry handling solutions to meet the client specific requirements include:

#### Permanent or temporary

A long term service is available for clients who have selected outsourcing as their strategy for delivery of some or all their enquiry handling service requirements. Alternatively, temporary outsourcing is available to provide cover during staff shortfalls, enquiry peaks or special situations.

#### Products

Support can be provided for the entire product portfolio, a sub-section of products only (e.g. the mature, non-promoted products), or for a single product or therapeutic area.

### Scope

A full enquiry handling service can be provided, whereby enquiries are handled with reference to the product labeling and/or existing standard responses, or by a search of the literature (standard texts and/or online). Alternatively, first line support only is available if required.

### Service hours

Services can be provided during standard office hours only, for extended hours, outside of office hours only, or on a full 24/7 basis. Ad hoc cover is also available, whereby enquiries are handled as and when the client's in-house team is not available.

## How Medical Information Outsourcing Works in Practice

The Medical Information Outsourcing model is tailored to the client's specific requirements, based around the following generic service model.

### Enquiry handling

Enquiries received at the client's switchboard are automatically transferred on tagged lines. This enables the enquiry to be routed directly to the team that has been trained to handle the client's enquiries, and ensures that the enquiries will be handled in line with client requirements.

All enquiries are handled in accordance with agreed client-specific Working Practices which cover aspects such as adverse event and defective product reporting, and the specifics of enquiry handling.

### Enquiry responses

Depending on the client's service requirements, enquiries are handled with reference to the product labeling, existing standard responses (standard letters, Q&A's and FAQ's), client in-house data (monographs, data on file, etc), and standard sources (textbooks and online).

### Logging and reporting

All enquiries are initially logged on paper and are then transcribed to a client-specific database in MS Access. Detailed enquiry reports and summary reports are generated from the logging database, tailored to the client's specific requirements.

## About Us

Our solutions are effectively designed to support brands and products. The scope of the Pharmcentre portfolio ranges Medical affairs, Pharmacovigilance and safety call center, Patient compliance, Product complaints, Clinical Trials, Clinical IT and Healthcare marketing management.

PharmCentre is ISO 9001, 20000 and 27001 certified. In addition, it uses advanced telephony technologies, secured databases and seamless integration of all our contact center teams globally.

We have a global reach with offices in the USA, Europe, Japan and South Asia.