



# **MEASURING OUTCOMES IN MEDICAL AFFAIRS – THE KEY COMPONENTS TO BE CONSIDERED**

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# Measuring outcomes in medical affairs – the key components to be considered

By Caroline Phillips



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**T**he role of medical affairs (MA) and disease-state education has become essential in advancing patient care and supporting healthcare professionals (HCPs).

With pharmaceutical companies significantly investing in these initiatives, it's crucial not only to provide educational content but also to implement robust mechanisms that assess the effectiveness of these efforts. Measuring outcomes has emerged as a best practice in ensuring that medical education delivers meaningful impact and aligns with key healthcare objectives.

## Why measuring outcomes matters

In today's rapidly evolving pharmaceutical landscape, demonstrating the tangible impact of medical education is paramount. Here are key reasons why measuring outcomes is a best practice:

- **Accountability:** measuring outcomes ensures that pharmaceutical investments in medical education and medical affairs programmes are justified. It allows companies to showcase the return on investment (ROI) by demonstrating how educational interventions translate into improvements in clinical behaviour
- **Continuous improvement:** outcome data provides invaluable insights that can be used to refine and optimise educational strategies. Understanding what works and what doesn't enable organisations to make informed decisions about future programming
- **Stakeholder engagement:** the ability to show measurable outcomes builds trust and engagement with key stakeholders, including HCPs, regulatory bodies and patients. It provides evidence of how education initiatives improve healthcare practices and outcomes.

## Key components of effective outcome measurement

Implementing a successful outcomes measurement framework requires a combination of data, technology and real-world impact analysis. Several best practices have emerged that help ensure the accuracy and relevance of outcome metrics:

- **Define variables or outcomes to measure:** any key behaviour shifts that need to be measured need to be clearly defined in advance so that the entire programme or campaign can be modelled to support those outcomes
- **Data-driven framework:** collecting baseline data on HCP knowledge and behaviour before an educational intervention provides a foundation for tracking improvements over time. A comprehensive outcomes approach includes both engagement metrics (reach and participation) and knowledge transfer metrics, which assess shifts in understanding and clinical practice
- **Tailored engagement:** personalising educational content to specific HCP needs is essential for maximising engagement. Leveraging tools such as artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning to target content delivery based on specialty, region or past behaviour is key to fostering meaningful clinical change
- **Behavioural impact:** measuring real-world changes in behaviour, such as prescribing patterns or clinical decision-making, is a crucial step in demonstrating the effectiveness of medical education. Collaboration with data analytics platforms to track these changes provides actionable insights into how education impacts practice

- **Global and local relevance:** global medical education programmes must also consider localised medical practices and regulations. Tailoring content to the specific needs of regional audiences ensures that programmes remain relevant and effective, no matter where HCPs practice
- **Scale:** campaigns must be executed at sufficient scale in order for impact to be robustly measured.

## Medscape's leadership in measuring outcomes

*As a long-standing leader in digital medical education, Medscape has developed a proven outcomes-driven approach that aligns with these best practices. Medscape's data-driven framework, combined with its global reach and real-world impact tracking, makes it an invaluable partner for pharmaceutical companies looking to achieve measurable results in their medical education initiatives, providing a clear picture of how education influences knowledge, confidence and behaviour.*

*While many platforms offer engagement metrics, Medscape's commitment to measuring real-world outcomes, such as script-level changes, sets it apart. Furthermore, its personalised approach to content delivery, powered by AI, ensures that HCPs receive the right information at the right time, which is crucial for driving meaningful clinical change.*

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