

Brave new world: Evolving person-based interactions in HCP engagement

Discover key considerations for successful adoption of hybrid roles

As the life science industry adapts to and prepares for a post-pandemic world, face-to-face healthcare professional (HCP) engagement remains a key channel. However, there remains a growing desire for more remote and digital forms of interaction, owing to the increased flexibility they offer HCPs. As a result, HCPs now expect flexible, personalized and ideally integrated engagement, highlighting the necessity of a well-tuned, hybrid model for person-based interactions. IQVIA research identified five key areas of challenges for effective hybrid engagement:

<p>Role profile and team attributes</p> <p>Company representatives must have the right attributes for different types of role and engagement approaches.</p>	<p>Initial training is not enough</p> <p>There must be structured, ongoing coaching and learning to build confidence with remote engagement.</p>	<p>Define the right objectives</p> <p>Specific objectives must define new expectations and measures of success, and evolve as experience and confidence grows.</p>	<p>Line manager and leader buy-in</p> <p>Proactive support of line managers and senior leaders is essential to communicate and reinforce new ways of working.</p>	<p>Relevant proposition and content</p> <p>Content must be adapted and tailored to the remote channel.</p>
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IQVIA's 7 key success factors for effective hybrid engagement

So, how do we overcome the challenges and embrace the hybrid approach to HCP engagement? In an IQVIA webinar, we discussed the key success factors for effective hybrid management. Take a look at the summary of these success factors below.



1. People

People and their abilities are at the center of effective hybrid HCP engagement models. Before you organize your approach to HCP engagement, you must define the roles you need and their requirements. Answering key questions, such as:

- What activities do you want teams to do?
- How do you want them to organize their work?
- What support will they need to adapt to these roles?
- Will ways of working vary by role or by the individual?

By answering these questions, you can build new training plans, define measures of success for sales reps, evolve recruitment methods, and create a continuous learning mindset — which is invaluable for creating the foundation of a successful hybrid approach. At this stage, you may also decide on the optimal balance of hybrid vs. field work, based on factors including remote proficiency, HCP locations and team size.

2. Audience and channels

Engaging with the right HCP at the right time, with the right channel and information, is the key to optimal HCP engagement. This doesn't happen overnight — it takes collection, integration and analysis of data, and using this to reinform segmentation, targeting and best engagement approaches.

Key elements include:

- Developing HCP personas, style types and engagement journeys.
- Building HCP preferences, including optimal meeting times, channel mixes, and content type.
- Assigning channels to HCPs by value, which means associating highest value HCPs with their highest impact channels. Aiming for an integrated, connected experience that is ultimately omnichannel in nature.
- Ensuring HCP proposition is relevant and adds value.

3. Proposition and content

IQVIA research suggests that HCPs expect content to be relevant, tailored to the channel, and ideally interactive. This means that the same content used in face-to-face interactions may not necessarily work well in a virtual interaction, leading to sub-optimal HCP engagement. Data from IQVIA shows that in most countries, the use of digital materials in calls via laptops or portable devices is low, so there is still scope for significant improvement in use of digital-based materials.

IQVIA research also highlights HCPs are most interested in content that follows the three P's approach.

- Help their **patients**.
- Learn from their **peers**.
- Support their clinical **practice** with professional education.

4. Integrate seamless and compliant technology

One of the best ways to encourage a positive experience for HCPs is to ensure any technology used is easy and seamless. A poor technology experience may waste time and detract from the messages or content to be delivered. This also applies to representatives — if using technology isn't easy or doesn't help the interaction, they will be reluctant to use it and may not have the chance to build confidence with remote engagement. So, be sure to build and utilize flexible, connected technology platforms that create an easy experience for both HCPs and representatives.

It's also important to remember that HCP expectations and technology are continually evolving, so ongoing review and evolution of your technology will ensure that new capabilities consistently align with, or exceed, HCPs' expectations.

5. Measurement and insight

New measures or improving existing measures is essential to ensure the right outcomes for hybrid engagement. Start with some key basic metrics and allow these metrics to quickly evolve as more insights come to light.

Increased use of digital approaches is likely to generate more data, therefore it's important your organization is equipped with analytical capabilities in order to embrace and use this new data to continually evolve HCP engagement experience.

6. Performance management

To reinforce new requirements and maximize performance of representatives adopting hybrid approaches, you must firmly establish expectations and ensure incentives or rewards encourage adoption of the new approach. Start by:

- Establishing an agreed way of working using both new and existing channels.
- Providing initial, close coaching and support including a continuous learning mindset.
- Defining relevant measures for your 'hybrid journey stage'.
- Incentivizing desired behavior for the team, individuals and managers to encourage early success.

7. Change management

A shared vision and a change management plan are essential to ensure organizational teams are working towards the same goals. Hybrid engagement is likely to be part of other organizational strategies such as omnichannel marketing, customer focus, commercial transformation, or IT ambitions affecting many parts of the business. Therefore, all supporting functions must be aligned to ensure success.

Examples of techniques to consider include:

- Proof of concept programs.
- Internal champions to drive 'bottom-up'.
- Peer support and learning programs.
- Experience of external vendors.

How are companies adapting to the emerging need for hybrid roles in HCP engagement?

Hybrid roles are fast becoming essential for successful HCP engagement, but insight from IQVIA suggests there remains significant room for improvement.

IQVIA's Liz Murray, Global Lead, Centre for Excellence in HCP Engagement Contract Sales and Medical Solutions (CSMS), recently led a webinar, Brave new world: Embracing 'hybrid' HCP engagement. In this webinar, a poll was conducted to understand where organizations currently stand with the hybrid model, their challenges, and what the future holds. You can watch the full webinar on demand [here](#), and read a summary of the poll results, [here](#).

Overall, it is clear that remote engagement has been extremely important for life sciences companies throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Now, as we begin to embrace the hybrid model of engagement, IQVIA's Liz Murray shares further insights on the future of HCP engagement in [this video](#).

Helping you to re-design your engagement models for better experiences, better results

The IQVIA CSMS team has more than 20 years of experience providing HCP engagement solutions, including remote, hybrid and face-to-face. **Get in touch today to discover how we can support your engagement model.**

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