

Bridging gaps in patient support programs: Leveraging Analytics Maturity Model for enhanced outcomes



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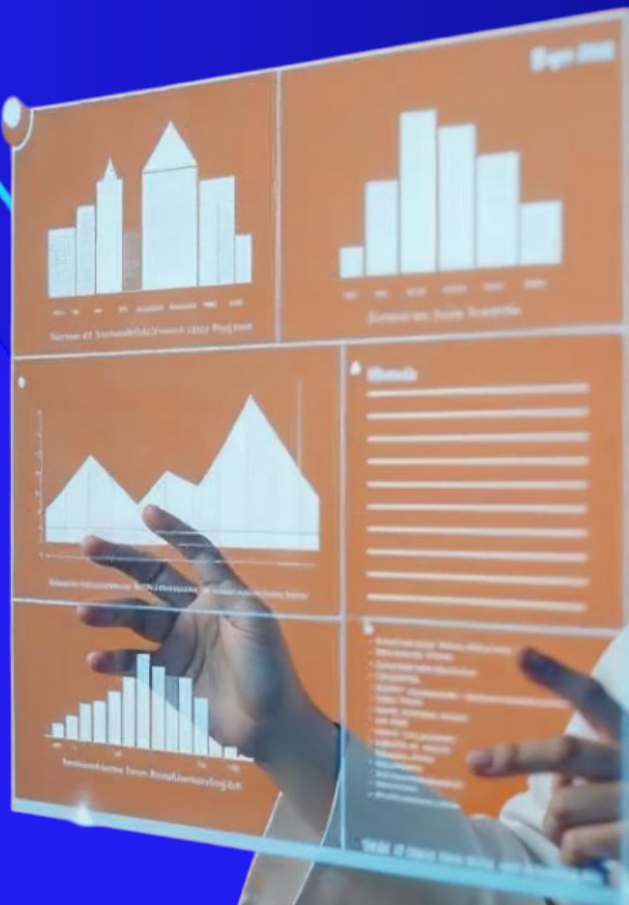


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Abstract

Patient support programs (PSPs) play a pivotal role in improving patient outcomes by providing critical services such as financial aid, adherence support, and patient education throughout the patient journey. However, managing these programs efficiently poses several challenges, including fragmented patient data, inconsistent engagement, and difficulty tracking patient outcomes. In addition to these challenges, organizations find it difficult to manage these programs and track their complex workflows. To overcome these hurdles, organizations are increasingly turning to analytics to unlock deeper insights, enhance operational efficiency, and improve patient experiences.

This whitepaper outlines the patient journey within PSPs, identifying key challenges across the three stages—pre-enrollment, onboarding, and long-term engagement. It emphasizes how strategic use of analytics can address these challenges by driving better decision-making and enabling proactive interventions.

The paper also introduces a **Patient Support Analytics Maturity Model**, a framework designed to help organizations assess their current analytics capabilities and benchmark their progress. The model serves as a roadmap, guiding PSP operators from basic reporting and data management to advanced predictive analytics and personalized patient support.

By leveraging this maturity model, organizations can systematically elevate their analytics capabilities, deliver greater patient value, optimize operational performance, and meet evolving industry demands.

Introduction

In the pharmaceutical industry, patient support programs (PSPs) are designed to assist patients in managing their health conditions and ensuring adherence to prescribed therapies. Objective of PSP is to improve access to therapy by providing services around various facets impacting access, which include patient and provider education, financial assistance, and support throughout the patient's journey. The effectiveness of PSPs, especially in complex long-term therapies (which are expensive), is critical in ensuring successful treatment regimens.

Despite documented evidence of the benefits of patient support programs, they often struggle to gain widespread traction among healthcare stakeholders. The key challenge for an organization managing patient support programs is scaling these programs, catering to numerous patients across geographies. Patient support programs are characterized by complex processes and intricate workflows, requiring close coordination and engagement with Payers and Providers, making it a resource-intensive program. **Based on a survey, a staggering 95% of Providers prescribing specialty medications report difficulties initiating therapy for their patients due to inefficient processes and outdated technology.** Implementing these programs successfully requires navigating operational challenges, often stretching organizational budgets and the bandwidth of the teams delivering these services.

Patients need a seamless, digitally enabled, personalized journey that provides timely information on their medication, associated costs, and medical advice catering to their unique healthcare needs. However, this ideal is difficult to achieve when the systems designed to support them are fragmented. **82% of patients reported delays in accessing their prescribed medication, with over 50% reporting a lack of information on insurance coverage and costs as the primary reason.** Patient support programs must not only prove their effectiveness in improving access to medication and tracking long-term health outcomes but also demonstrate their ability to improve the patient experience and foster patient loyalty while keeping costs under control.

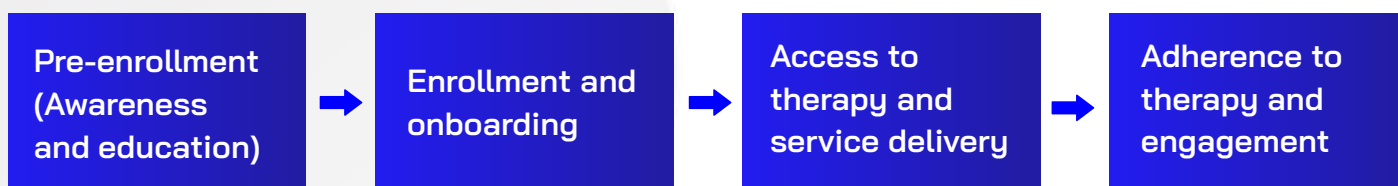
Patient support programs need to be enabled with intelligent processes and workflows that can deliver a personalized patient experience while optimizing resource utilization and cost. Advanced data analytics offer a powerful solution to these multifaceted challenges. By harnessing the power of data, organizations can gain deep insights into patient behavior, predict outcomes, and tailor support programs to individual needs. Analytics can provide insights to monitor key workflows and identify areas for further optimization, automate and streamline processes, and optimize resource allocation. These insights can transform patient support programs into more efficient patient-centric systems.

The next few segments focus on the patient journey, its challenges, and the potential impact of leveraging analytics.



Patient support program: Patient journey and challenges

The patient support journey can be broadly classified into four distinct phases:



Each phase comes with its own set of patient expectations and barriers, which pose unique challenges to a patient support team.

1. Pre-enrollment

At this stage, patients seek a better understanding of the disease, therapy, and its impact on their health, expenditure, and lifestyle. The key objective during this phase is to provide relevant information to patients and respond to any queries they may have regarding the program. A major challenge to address is AWARENESS; a survey reported that **59% have little to no knowledge of patient support programs, and 44% of patients wish to learn more about PSPs from online sources; however, only 10% of the patients found what they needed online.** This is an opportunity for organizations to streamline their engagement channels and content to address the key needs of patients.

2. Enrollment and onboarding

Once a patient decides to enroll in a support program, the team must ensure that the patient's information is processed quickly, allowing the patient to access medication in a timely manner. While the patient onboarding process may seem straightforward, it includes multiple manual and error-prone tasks that lead to delays in service delivery. Due to patients' lack of clarity of information needed, data entry mistakes, incomplete information, and manual modes of information transfer (like benefit verification processes or coordination with the provider office), teams end up reworking multiple patient applications, leading to significant delays in patient access to therapy.

3. Access to therapy and service delivery

Patients at this stage need guidance on overcoming barriers to therapy initiation. One of the critical barriers is financial, as patients often lack clarity on how much they would need to pay and how much would be covered. Patient support programs provide services around financial awareness and assistance like copay cards and bridge programs to ensure patients can initiate therapy; however, a survey shows that **37% of patients were not aware of manufacturer copay cards.** Another barrier, especially in injection/infusion-based therapies, is setting appointments for infusions. This needs coordination between patient and provider teams to ensure smooth therapy administration.

4. Adherence to therapy and engagement

Positive health outcomes for any long-term therapy depend on how persistent that patient is with the treatment. While most of the responsibility lies with the patient, the program needs to ensure that the patient has all the support needed for continuity of therapy. Patient needs across therapies vary, but most of them are around providing information and support on clinical and lifestyle-based queries. In addition to providing support to patients, pharmaceutical companies have an opportunity to engage with patients and collect critical information on adherence and health outcomes that can be leveraged as real-world data on how pharmaceutical products are improving patient lives which can be used to enhance access to therapy.



Application of analytics across patient journey in patient support services

The application of analytics in patient support programs can become a transformative tool for improving patient outcomes and optimizing care delivery. The integration of near real-time data from diverse sources—such as CRM data, patient surveys/feedback, specialty pharmacy, and API integration from Payers and other external vendors—enhances decision-making and fosters a more proactive approach to care delivery, ensuring timely, efficient, and personalized support.

There are four key areas where analytics can be applied across patient journey phases:

Monitoring and reporting

Analytics can be used to monitor and report key metrics and KPIs across the patient journey, which include standard metrics like patients enrolled and patients who completed the therapies and, measure and quantify patient engagement. Another application is to monitor the efficiencies of key workflows across the patient support journey, especially during enrollment, onboarding, and service delivery. By monitoring granular workflows across the patient journey, organizations can identify bottlenecks and take measures to improve. This would not only ensure faster access to therapy but also provide insights to improve productivity, optimize operations, and improve cost efficiency.

Smart workflows (Analytics driven automation)

A combination of process automation and advanced analytical and data science capabilities like natural language processing (NLP), machine learning (ML), and generative AI (GenAI) can automate multiple manual workflows. Processes across enrollment, onboarding, and servicing the patient are manual and error-prone, which take up significant workforce and resources. By automating workflows like processing enrollment forms, prioritizing cases for back-office staff, and responding to patient queries, organizations could improve productivity and achieve significant cost efficiencies while ensuring a smooth patient experience.

Patient journey mapping and personalization

A global survey conducted in 2020 revealed that 75% of patients wish their healthcare experiences were more personalized. Organizations can adopt analytics to map patient journeys by collecting data and feedback across the journey and take measures to provide patients with meaningful interventions that would be relevant. Personalizing a patient's journey would have a major downstream impact on adherence to the drug/therapy, which would impact the health outcomes.

Real-world evidence and health outcomes

Due to their high-touch nature, patient support programs provide a valuable opportunity to engage with patients throughout their healthcare journey and gather important data and feedback. Analyzing clinical and behavioral data can yield meaningful insights into real-world drug consumption patterns, their effectiveness, and associated risks. One of the key applications practiced with patient support programs collecting and reporting of adverse events (AE), providing valuable insights into drug safety across different patient demographics/segments.

The table below provides a summary of high-impact areas of analytics across the patient journey.

	Pre-enrollment	Enrollment and onboarding	Service delivery	Patient adherence
Monitoring and reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Track inbound patient inquiries and patient enrollments. Identify channels with the highest engagement levels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measure first pass clearance of enrollment forms. Inbound and outbound fax reconciliation and real-time tracking to identify duplicates and sort and prioritize cases based on timestamps. Measure the productivity of back-office team. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor the number of patients enrolling to financial assistance programs. Benefit verifications, prior authorization, triage & dispense tracking to identify and prevent potential delays and denials. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor patients' drop-offs. Measure patient engagement and identify content and channels with the highest engagement levels. Use predictive modeling to identify potential drop-offs and take pre-emptive measures.
Smart workflows		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Automated document validation aided with GenAI to identify inaccurate or incomplete documents and send notifications and reminders to both patients and providers. Prioritization of cases based on criticality and probability of success. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integration with payer systems to automate benefit verification (BV)/ prior authorization (PA) and other financial workflows. Decision support algorithms and automated alerts to perform RCA for delays/denials in the processes and to re-engineer workflows. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Automated reminders to ensure timely refills.
Patient journey mapping and personalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Patient and provider segmentation for targeted outreach. Channel and content customization based on the needs of patients/care providers. 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Automated, proactive collection and analysis of micro feedback to curate patient journeys. Next best action to engage the patient and ensure continuity.
Real-world evidence				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Automated flagging of adverse events. Comparative analysis of patients who are on support programs vs those who are not on support programs. Monitor long-term quality of life measures.

Impact

Low

High



Impact of leveraging analytics in patient support programs

★ Faster turnaround in therapy access

By using analytics-driven Smart workflows, PSPs can automate multiple tasks around enrollment, benefit verification (BV), and prior authorization (PA) processes, significantly reducing delays and mid-enrollment drop-offs, which improves access to the therapy.

★ Improved resource utilization and operational efficiency

Real-time monitoring and workflow optimization help identify inefficiencies in the patient journey, enrollment, onboarding, and service delivery processes. By leveraging insights, PSPs can target specific challenges and develop efficient processes that optimize resources and cost.

★ Personalized engagement for better adherence

Advanced patient journey mapping and segmentation enable PSPs to deliver personalized interventions based on individual patient needs, such as targeted education or financial support. These interventions directly impact medication adherence, leading to improved outcomes.

★ Enhanced patient awareness and support

Analytics can measure awareness and information needs across the patient journey and provide relevant information on time.

★ Generation of real-world evidence

PSPs can collect and analyze data on adverse events (AEs), therapy adherence, and patient-reported outcomes, enabling pharmaceutical companies to demonstrate real-world drug efficacy and safety. This supports regulatory submissions and continuous improvement in PSP design and therapy adoption.

PSP Analytics Maturity Model

Organizations realize the need to ramp up their analytics capabilities to better support the patient support programs and provide a great patient experience. Still, they often struggle to leverage their data effectively to realize the potential. To address this, organizations need a structured framework that would help them evaluate the sophistication of data and analytics that support the program and provide guidance on how to ramp up their analytics capabilities and business outcomes.

The Analytics Maturity Model for PSPs enables organizations to evaluate their utilization of data and analytics capabilities across 4 stages of maturity:

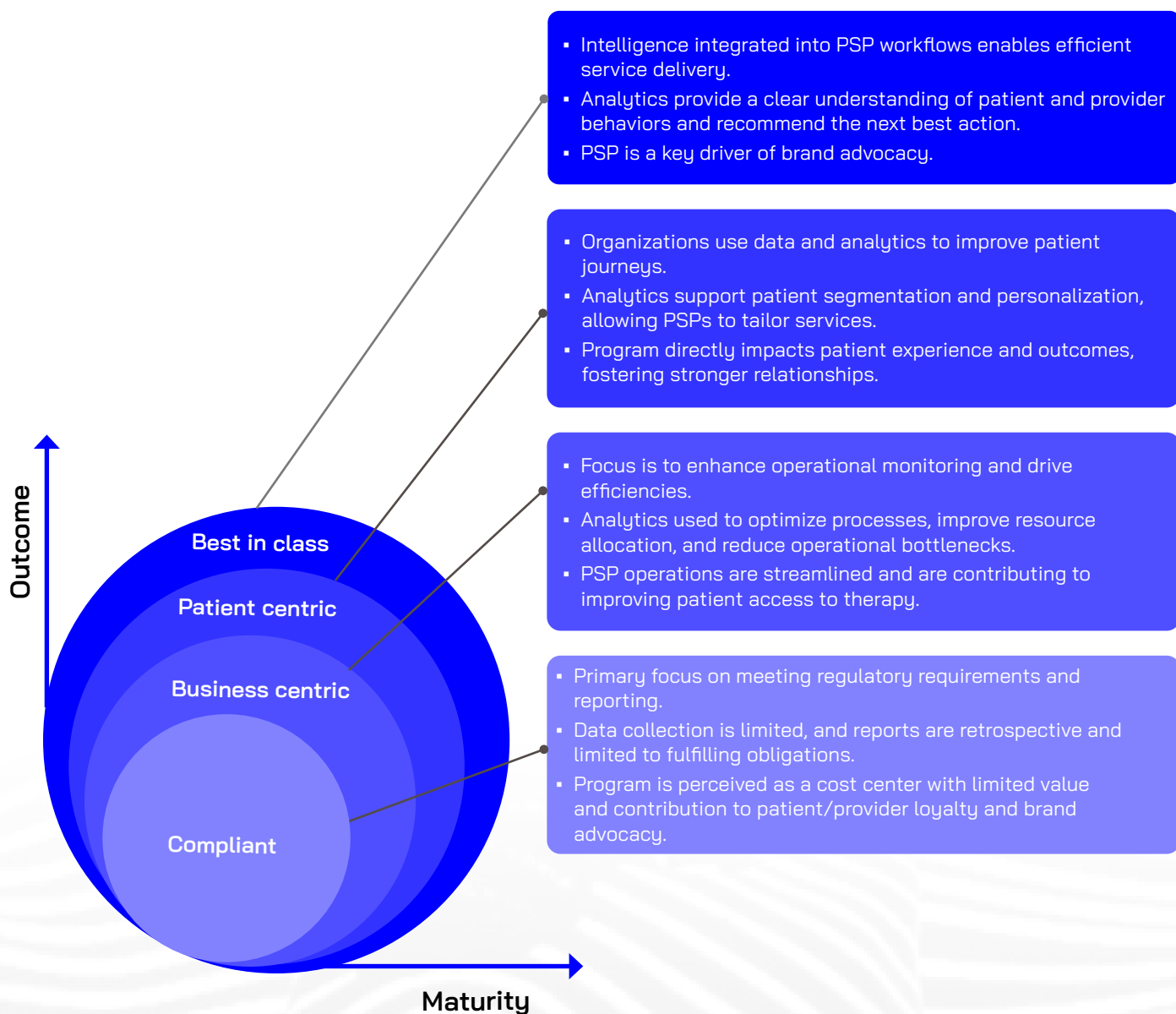


Figure 1: PSP Analytics Maturity Model

Organizations can use the following dimensions to evaluate maturity in PSP analytics.

- **Data management and integration:** Data is the key driver to analytics maturity and with patient support programs managed globally, managing data becomes even more complex. Pharmaceutical organizations often outsource patient services and engage with vendors across the globe to ensure smooth delivery across various regions, leading to high decentralization and fragmentation of data. Pharmaceutical organizations need to have a strong data management and Interoperability framework to ensure high-quality data can be used for downstream analytics.

An organization with high analytics maturity would be able to consolidate, standardize, and transform data from multiple vendors to create a single analytics data layer, which can easily provide insights to stakeholders across the patient support value chain.

- **Analytical capabilities:** Stakeholders across the patient support value chain have diverse business needs that would require both retrospective (descriptive) and prospective (predictive and prescriptive) analytics. These needs can vary from monitoring efficiencies of patient support workflows and providing guidance on managing patient cases at the back office to providing the next best action to engage patients or providers.

A mature organization should possess capabilities across the analytics spectrum, enabling them to create reports by retrospectively analyzing data, performing diagnostics, and prescribing actions to maximize business outcomes.

- **Access to analytics insights:** Insights into data and analytics are essential for all stakeholders in the patient support value chain. The true value of analytics can be realized by incorporating insights at grassroots level into key processes and workflows managed by teams working directly with patients. This approach helps in effectively managing and improving these important processes.

By providing analytics support to intake specialists and field reimbursement managers, organizations can significantly improve efficiency and productivity of the patient support program. A mature organization should be able to provide analytical insights to patient-facing stakeholders by integrating intelligence into key processes and workflows, offering access to insights at a granular level.

- **Organization alignment and culture:** This indicates the top-down buy-in and support for analytics. As mentioned in the access to analytics dimension, intelligence must be consumed and integrated across stakeholder levels. Organizations need to spend time, effort, and resources to utilize analytics across business cases. This means investing in the right tools and technology and providing training and opportunities to ensure stakeholders across the value chain are aware of leveraging analytics to improve processes they own.

Organizations with high levels of analytics maturity will demonstrate strong top-down support for leveraging analytics to generate actionable insights and foster a holistic, data-driven decision-making culture.

- **Tools and technology:** Effective and efficient analytics programs need strong backing of tools and technology that can automate and streamline multiple processes involved in extracting insights from data. These include data collection and management platforms, pre-built analytics platforms, integration tools, and reporting and visualization platforms.

For a global patient support program, the tools and technology should be able to create a scalable platform that can streamline end-to-end analytics processes – from data collection to reporting and visualization and integration to workflows.

Measuring analytics maturity

Dimensions	Low analytics maturity	High analytics maturity
 Data management and integration	Manual data collection and fragmented data across patient support workflows and hubs.	Single source of truth available, enabled by automated data collection, integration, standardization, and quality checks across multiple sources, with real-time updates ensuring accuracy and reliability.
 Analytics capabilities	Analytics capabilities are limited to meeting reporting needs with descriptive analytics and to a limited focus on leveraging analytics to provide actionable insights and recommendations.	A full spectrum of analytics capabilities, from descriptive to prescriptive, is used to generate actionable insights and drive data-driven decision-making.
 Access to analytics	Reports on PSP are made available to executive decision-makers with limited access to individuals managing patients and Providers.	Intelligence from data and analytics integrated into key workflows supporting stakeholders who directly engage with patients and Providers.
 Organizational alignment and culture	There is limited awareness of data and analytics, and there is a lack of executive buy-in to invest and develop analytics capabilities for patient support programs.	Strong leadership advocacy and high generalized awareness of data and analytics with a strong focus on data-driven decision-making.
 Tools and technology	Lack of sophisticated tools to manage key processes and workflows – leading to high efforts in managing analytics programs for patient support.	Establish a framework with tools available to support and scale analytics and ensure a standardized, streamlined process to manage analytics across the enterprise.

Figure 2: Measuring analytics maturity

Conclusion

The growing complexity of healthcare and patient expectations highlights the critical role of patient support programs (PSPs) in ensuring timely, personalized, and effective care. However, the challenges of managing fragmented workflows, inconsistent patient engagement, and inflated delivery costs necessitate a transformative approach driven by analytics.

This whitepaper underscores the potential of analytics to reshape PSPs by streamlining operations, enabling personalized patient journeys, and driving better health outcomes. The Patient Support Analytics Maturity Model offers a structured framework for organizations to assess and enhance their capabilities, ensuring the alignment of strategic goals with operational execution. By progressing through the stages of this model, organizations can unlock deeper insights, optimize resource utilization, and deliver superior patient experiences.

In an era where patient-centric care is a strategic imperative, leveraging advanced analytics is no longer optional but essential. Organizations that adopt this mindset will not only create cost-efficient and impactful PSPs but also foster trust, loyalty, and improved outcomes for the patients they serve. The journey to analytics maturity is a step toward fulfilling the promise of PSPs as a cornerstone of modern healthcare.

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