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Senior Editor

What's in a pharma's corporate reputation? Healthcare providers' willingness to write a prescription, according to a new study from WE Communications.

Two-thirds of healthcare providers said they are reluctant to prescribe a drug from a pharma that does not have a good reputation, according to the study [report](#). The survey queried more than 1,000 healthcare providers in six countries — Australia, China, Germany, India, UK and US — about biotech and pharma corporate brands and the connection to products they would recommend or prescribe.



Stephanie Marchesi

“The basic premise was if a healthcare professional was choosing between two different products that were similar — such as safety, efficacy and price — what would sway them or influence them to prescribe one product over another?” said Stephanie Marchesi, president of WE Global Health.

The HCPs were given a list of potential influences, with corporate reputation coming in as the No. 1 deciding factor, she said. It was followed closely by the pharma's reputation as a leader in a specific health condition. When asked how much corporate reputation matters on a scale of 1 to 10, 61% of HCPs gave scores of 8, 9 or 10. The overall average was 7.66.

“Corporate brands matter — a lot,” the study report concludes.

The factors that go into what doctors, nurses and other HCPs include in evaluating a pharma’s reputation included: the quality of educational content shared; its relationships with patient and advocacy groups; strong leadership; good relationships with other HCPs and investment in environmental and social issues.

Among those factors, providers chose patient centricity as the top trait, yet only 45% of HCPs said pharma companies are doing an adequate job of delivering on that, Marchesi said.

The WE team was surprised that corporate reputation was so influential in prescribing behavior, she said, along with another survey result. Corporate reputation also outranked the relationship HCPs had with pharma sales reps.

WE was inspired to run the survey by the many opinion polls gauging consumer opinions of pharma companies during the pandemic. They wanted to know what those measures would look like for healthcare professionals, Marchesi said.

“There’s long been the question that to what degree does the corporate brand influence any decision making. We wanted to tease out just how influential is the corporate brand,” she said. “Our hope is that these findings help arm corporate communications to make the case internally for funding and resources they need to build and protect their company’s corporate reputation.”

AUTHOR



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