



ENVISION PHARMA  
GROUP  
Smarter, faster outcomes for life sciences

# The medical affairs game changer

AI and the importance  
of platform, process,  
and people to get  
meaningful impact  
from big data

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**Artificial intelligence (AI) is easily the most universally engaging, hotly debated, and misunderstood topic in medical affairs circles today. As human beings, we are simultaneously fascinated and alarmed at the pace and extent of AI's transformative power in our world.**

In medical affairs, we are intrigued by the potential for better, smarter tools for our increasingly complex roles. Nevertheless, we understand the importance of scientific rigor and due diligence to ensure that patients' well-being remains our priority.

With the intent to bring clarity to this issue, we delve into the transformative power of AI in medical affairs and explore our approach to maximizing this impact through the right platform, refined processes, and skilled people to drive exceptional performance.

In this e-book you will:

- Discover the transformative power of AI for your medical affairs operations
- Understand the necessity of selecting the right AI-powered platform to deliver high-quality context-aware insights, specific to medical affairs
- Uncover the steps to a robust process that forms the foundation for converting insights into meaningful action
- Gain strategies for empowering your team to confidently embrace AI and use insights to drive informed decision-making

### Medical affairs as a key player in shaping healthcare

Medical affairs is a strategic function dedicated to revolutionizing clinical practice and enhancing patient outcomes through accurate and truthful communication with internal and external stakeholders across the product life cycle. Medical affairs teams also serve as the company's conduit for perspectives from external stakeholders. This role requires gathering, processing, and contextualizing external information to facilitate actionable informed decisions about the best product for the right patient at the right time.

However, as the healthcare landscape is marked by increasing scientific complexity and more stakeholders become involved, the challenge lies in navigating the expanding ocean of diverse data sources where insights can be found. The sheer effort and time required for manual data gathering, processing, consolidation across sources, and interpretation of actionable insights for the process is staggering.

Manual processing borders on impossibility without sacrificing accuracy, inadvertently introducing bias, or missing subtle trends over time. Even in the best-case scenario, actionable insights emerge too slowly for teams to keep pace with rapidly changing landscapes or truly measure the impact of their actions over time.



# A well-aligned platform, driven by people, and accompanied by the right processes, has brought about a revolutionary shift in the way we act upon insights

Used as a tool in the right way, AI can transform insights processing to expedite decision-making and the time from insights to action. It is at this nexus where the essential blend of platform, process, and people is crucial for deploying AI to deliver impactful and actionable insights efficiently. Without this synergy, the potential will remain untapped and insights will continue to gather dust.

## The Envision approach: Platform, process, and people



### Platform

Implementing the right platform that can automate high volumes of data efficiently is vital for obtaining timely actionable information.



### Process

The right processes should be in place to enable efficient discovery, delivery, and utilization of these insights.



### People

Investing in training and change management programs to empower teams is essential for the successful execution of impactful insights throughout the product life cycle. The goal, as ever, is to positively impact the lives of patients.

In this e-book, we will discuss each element of this approach and explore their roles in creating valuable insights.

## AI-powered platforms drive meaningful insights in medical affairs

Harnessing the power of AI can significantly accelerate the time to derive value from data. The successful deployment of a well-aligned platform, driven by people, and accompanied by the right processes, has brought about a revolutionary shift in the way we act upon insights.

## The role of life sciences-specific AI-powered platforms

Not all platforms are created equal when it comes to utility in extracting meaningful insights from medical data. To deliver high-quality context-aware insights, a platform must be specifically designed for use in medical affairs. This means being able to handle data from a global perspective across millions of ontologies, intelligently consolidating this data into related topics, and separating them into themes that are meaningful to medical affairs activities, such as data gaps, safety data, and efficacy data.



## The benefits of AI-powered platforms in medical affairs



### Increased speed of decision-making

AI-powered platforms expedite the entire insights journey, enabling data-insights-action to be achieved in days, compared to months without AI.



### Convenience

AI, unlike software-as-a-service (SaaS), allows users to pivot to use cases.



### Long-term investment

It does not require annual upgrades like SaaS platforms.



### Better evidence-based, high-value insights

Resulting actionable insights come from a stronger evidence base, are traceable, and explainable, which can ultimately improve the lives of patients.

## Case study: Improving global insights through standardized data collection for medical science liaisons (MSLs)

### Challenge

Inconsistent data collection practices across international teams made it difficult to extract meaningful conclusions from free-text notes generated by MSLs.

This hindered the ability to identify global trends and address knowledge gaps.

### Solution

AI-generated data analyzed how MSLs in different countries collected and structured their free-text notes.

Utilizing AI's ability to sift through data and promptly identify trends, the most efficient and informative method was pinpointed and a globally standardized process was established.

### Outcome

The standardized process led to a significant increase in the volume and consistency of high-quality free-text notes.



## Converting insights to impact

No system can replace the human capacity for intuitive decision-making. AI-powered platforms can provide teams with consolidated trends across massive, diverse sources of data, but it is up to people to recognize these trends as actionable insights and make decisions based on them. For us to effectively utilize these insights, the right processes must be in place.

## Senior leadership support ensures that organizations can implement necessary processes

### [Navigating the insights journey: The process for AI-driven medical affairs](#)

Developing a comprehensive medical insights strategy first demands the sponsorship and buy-in of senior leadership to drive meaningful change. Senior leadership support ensures that organizations can implement necessary processes and foster a culture that values the collection and utilization of medical insights.

The process of converting AI insights into action involves several key stages: It begins with an inquisitive proactive mindset – understanding not just what we know but also delving into the questions, themes, and topics we want to explore further. Crafting a focused strategy and flexible operating model allows us to refine our approach and proactively turn insights into meaningful outcomes, rather than leaving this to chance.

## Insights strategy

### Identifying the trigger points

This involves identifying critical junctures, such as key moments in the product life cycle, data release dates, or guideline updates enabling the strategic planning and strategizing of insights-gathering efforts.

### Cross-functional collaboration

Collaboration across functions is key to an effective insights strategy. Once the required information is identified, the team that is responsible for this insight at a functional level must be determined, potentially involving colleagues from commercial, market access, or patient engagement teams.

By breaking down silos and fostering cross-functional approaches, we not only enhance credibility but also elevate the importance of insights throughout the organization.



## Identify which stakeholders should be the focus

Identifying stakeholders is a critical aspect of our proactive strategy. Whether they're healthcare professionals, patient organizations, payer groups, or other entities, understanding which key players should be the focus ensures a targeted approach. This active engagement allows us to tailor our insights collection methods to specific stakeholder needs.

## Establish the channel for collecting insights

There are a multitude of sources for collecting insights, including MSLs, medical information channels, advisory boards, social listening, and competitor intelligence. Recent strides have been made in establishing field medical teams as a primary contributing source of insights. The investment in MSLs is key, not only for the dissemination of data, but also for providing the data, facts, and observations from visits, forming the backbone of the insights journey and significantly impacting overall strategy.

## Analytics

Analytics serve as the next frontier, transforming information into actionable insights. The challenge lies not just in analyzing data but in effectively communicating these insights back to the organization.

## Integrating communication for sustainable success

Effectively leveraging insights requires unwavering commitment from all stakeholders. Demonstrating the internal value of insights through compelling use cases and clear communication is crucial, ensuring resourcing aligns with organizational priorities. When the whole organization is aware of the value of medical insights, the resources will follow. Integrating communication about the impact of insights into the process is essential for sustained success.





Rather than settling for the status quo, fostering a culture that perpetually seeks advancements and innovations ensures that our insights process remains dynamic and responsive to the ever-changing demands of medical affairs

### **Empowering field teams through effective communication**

Meaningful outcomes from insights require both inbound and outbound communication. Field teams play a central role in bidirectional communication, aligning information with the company's strategy and shaping it accordingly. For this reason, the actions that the company takes as a result of incoming field medical insights must be shared back with external field teams. Neglecting this may demotivate field teams from contributing insights and lead to misalignments between field medical strategy, resources, and program evolution.

Therefore, it is imperative to integrate a transparent communication process seamlessly into the operating model. This involves aggregating data effectively to comprehensively outline the insights campaign, delineating key questions and themes, presenting the garnered insights, elaborating on the actions undertaken, and highlighting the ensuing impact. This simple yet efficient approach works to effectively communicate successful outcomes, and reduce duplicative efforts across geographies from global to local levels.

### **Continuous process improvement is vital**

As we navigate this evolving landscape, committing to incremental enhancements allows us to learn from our experiences. Rather than settling for the status quo, fostering a culture that perpetually seeks advancements and innovations ensures that our insights process remains dynamic and responsive to the ever-changing demands of medical affairs.

### **People lie at the heart of the process**

Embracing AI for medical insights is an active pursuit – one that demands proactive strategies, cross-functional collaboration, and continuous improvement. Nevertheless, this transformative process is underpinned by people.



## The necessity of a people-centric approach to successful AI

### Importance of people

The key to converting insights into action and delivering meaningful outcomes is the intrinsic curious nature of humans and the ability to ask “why,” highlighting the imperative to invest in and empower individuals for the seamless closure of the insights loop.

While the use of AI can improve efficiencies, implementing new technology requires huge organizational change, as well as change on an individual level. However, concerns about team capacity, resource constraints, and uncertainty or hesitancy to embrace the technology, adds complexity to the process.

### Navigating the critical stage of change

#### Demonstrating value

The first step in driving organizational change involves raising awareness about impending changes and fostering a desire to participate. To initiate transformative progress, it's essential to demonstrate the value proposition of AI to the organization through effective campaigns and internal communication strategies. Without establishing the tangible benefits, gaining support for organizational change will be challenging.

## Case study: Leveraging effective cross-team collaboration to demonstrate value

### Challenge

The medical affairs team lacked dedicated communications expertise to effectively design and execute impactful change management campaigns.

### Solution

Internal collaboration with a communications colleague who was eager to expand their knowledge of medical affairs.

This led to a mutually beneficial opportunity: the communications person gained valuable industry-specific knowledge, while the medical affairs team received much-needed communications support.

### Outcome

Targeted communications campaigns were developed to champion the value of AI-driven insights and highlight success stories, fostering greater understanding across the organization.



## Empowering through training

Effective training programs are essential to equip professionals with the skills necessary for successful AI integration.



### Data literacy

Digital literacy emerges as a new pillar in competency models, ensuring professionals possess the necessary knowledge to collaborate effectively with AI tools.



### Understanding AI capabilities

Individuals must not only be trained on the capabilities of the platform but also be given a baseline understanding of AI. This includes level-setting on the types of AI (such as differences between generative AI and natural language processing) and how they tie into specific functionalities relevant to their roles.



### Quality data input

Ensuring the entry of high-quality and valuable data into AI systems is paramount. Individuals must understand the significance of accurate and relevant information, emphasizing a collective responsibility for maintaining data integrity.



### Structuring inputs

Training is required to ensure people know how to structure their inputs effectively, such as by steering away from the use of abbreviations and introducing a new vocabulary that aligns with the requirements of the AI platform. Old "best practices" may need to be unlearned. For example, in the past, field teams may have been discouraged from inputting detailed information into call notes, opting instead for brevity to simplify back-end manual processing.

Today, the AI-powered processing of free text means that field teams are encouraged to write complete and accurate call notes, focusing on meaning without worrying about length.



### Identifying relevant information

Training individuals to discern necessary information and retrieve insights is foundational. This involves instilling a curiosity-driven mindset, encouraging professionals to actively pursue valuable data during their engagements, and helping them recognize knowledge gaps.





Organizations must empower individuals to embrace the transformative potential of AI while fostering a culture of continuous learning

### Reinforcement

As employees begin to use the technology every day, reinforcement becomes a linchpin. Identifying champions and ambassadors plays a vital role in advocating for the new process, offering support, and providing resources such as cheat sheets. Communicating early wins, successes, and the impact of data contributions keeps individuals motivated and enthusiastic about the change.

This holistic approach places people at the center. From change management strategies to training programs and digital literacy initiatives, organizations must empower individuals to embrace the transformative potential of AI while fostering a culture of continuous learning and adaptation.

### Platform, process, and people

In the dynamic landscape of medical affairs, the quest for meaningful insights demands a harmonious interplay of platform, process, and people. Insights play a pivotal role in revolutionizing clinical practice and patient outcomes.

The surge in external stakeholders and the evolution of data into a vast ocean necessitate leveraging AI. However, AI's potential hinges on a well-aligned platform for rapid data automation, a streamlined process for effective insights utilization, and, most crucially, empowered people for driving the insights journey.

**Interested in learning more about how Envision Pharma Group can support you in implementing AI into your organization?**

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