

Same Market, New Opportunities

Moving Beyond “Share-Shift” Battles

BY LISA MORRIS, IMS HEALTH

There’s an old story about a man who persisted in searching for his lost keys under the lamppost because “that’s where the light was best.” In the same way, pharmaceutical companies have searched for new business by concentrating on those market opportunities illuminated by traditional information sources (e.g., measures of total and new prescription share and volume, primary market research, etc.). Consequently, they have all too often had to compete for the same turf “under the lamppost.”

Anonymized patient-level data (APLD), which provide a longitudinally-linked record of patients’ medical and pharmaceutical care, provide detailed information on patient, payor, and provider dynamics, and represent a searchlight that can illuminate previously darkened areas of the market — areas that can hold the key to growth.

By providing rich, quantifiable details on the diagnosis, testing, medical procedures, and pharmaceutical therapy for millions of de-identified patients, APLD familiarizes marketers with patient types and treatment practices, and allows them to evaluate the market from a number of different angles. This capability is critical in today’s complex market, where making a sale involves understanding and addressing the simultaneous interests of patients, payors, and prescribers. APLD provides pharmaceutical companies with a more precise, quantifiable view of the interactions between these key stakeholders. While dispensed prescription data will always be the gold standard for measuring market performance, and primary market research data will



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always play a role in measuring attitudes and perceptions, APLD provides added visibility that can allow companies to capitalize on opportunities that may go undetected by the competition, and move beyond “share-shift” battles.

Given the richness and precision afforded by its insights, APLD can and should be used to inform the full spectrum of a company’s marketing activities, starting with the brand team’s need to assess market size and performance, segment patients and physicians, make pricing and market access decisions, and develop and deliver key promotional messages. One of the unique benefits of this type of information is that it can not only be used by marketing teams to enhance their understanding of complex market dynamics, but it can also be used by sales organizations to better segment and reach physicians, better monitor product performance, and more effectively align sales compensation metrics with more granular marketing objectives. In this manner, APLD allows marketing teams to develop measurable strategies and tactics based on a more robust understanding of their market that can be translated into actionable sales strategies and tactics that can be evaluated on an ongoing basis. It has the ability to unify companies’ commercial activities by bridging the gap between primary market research (which is known for providing rich insights, but does not lend itself to timely tracking and trending) and dispensed prescription data (which provides timely tracking and trending insights, but less richness around specific treatment behaviors). Therefore, using APLD, pharmaceutical companies are better able to address the simultaneous interests of patients, payors and prescribers with a cohesive approach to the market.

In this article we will explore how APLD can be used by companies to optimize their marketing activities. Specifically we will examine how APLD can be used to enhance two key marketing activities: assessment of market and competitive dynamics to identify new brand opportunities, and segmentation of patients to inform/refine product positioning and messaging.

THE LIGHT DAWNS: A BIOLOGICS MANUFACTURER REVISES ITS COMPETITIVE SET

Sometimes, after observing how products are actually used in the real world, companies may rethink certain aspects of their marketing strategy. Let’s examine how one large manufacturer used a better understanding of actual treatment patterns to reassess its competition, identify new opportunities to drive share, and ultimately refine its positioning and messaging.

A large biologics manufacturer was interested in understanding treatment patterns for moderate to severe psoriasis patients in order to validate its product positioning and overall marketing strategy.

Pre-launch primary market research with physicians seemed to suggest that physicians would consider using the product — which was indicated for those patients who were candidates for treatment with phototherapy or other systemics — as an alternative to phototherapy. The company was planning on positioning its product as a more efficacious alternative to phototherapy, a treatment that, like the company’s biologic, was administered in doctors’ offices.

To study real-world use, the company turned to APLD, the only source that tracks treatment across all ambulatory sites of care, as well as both drug and non-drug treatments (traditional prescription databases cannot accurately measure usage of biologics, which may be infused in clinical settings, or phototherapy, which is a non-drug treatment). APLD is also unique in its ability to show drug utilization by indication, an important level of detail for biologics, which are oftentimes used for multiple indications.

The company relied on a patient-flow model to better understand treatment patterns in this market. Patient-flow models have become a standard modeling application for identifying where patients enter the healthcare system, and how treatment progresses within a disease area. Such models are useful in identifying opportunities to maximize product utilization by, for instance, disclosing a large untreated population,

uncovering diagnostic hurdles, or revealing the need for a combination therapy. The company populated the patient flow model with APLD, mapping out the journey that psoriasis patients take through the healthcare system, and paying particular attention to the treatment choices that physicians were making (see Fig. 1).

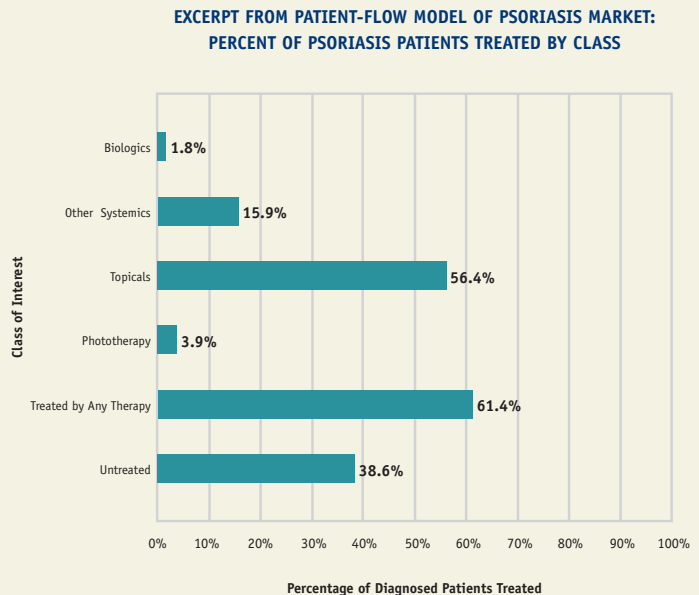
Through this analysis, the company realized that very few patients (3.9 percent) were actually being treated with phototherapy, which was significantly less than they had assumed based on the thought leadership interviews and physician survey data they had gathered. The company realized that this segment of patients, which had originally driven the focus of their positioning and messaging, was actually quite small, and didn't represent as large of an opportunity as it had originally thought. In contrast, other systemics accounted for 16 percent of the market and represented a significant opportunity. Given this evidence and insight, the company revised its original marketing strategy to include the segment of patients who were on other systemics in order to drive greater uptake of the product, and refined product positioning and messaging accordingly.

The sales force could carry out this strategy by identifying the physician segments that treat patients with phototherapy and systemics respectively, and delivering tailored messages about the benefits of the biologic over the respective therapy. Both marketing and sales could then track the effectiveness of their programs by monitoring share of new patients and share of patients that switch to their brand from each of the competitor therapies.

This evidence-based assessment of physician treatment behaviors caused the brand team to reshape its competitive set and revealed an opportunity to increase product utilization. Given its coverage of biologics and non-pharmacologic therapies as well as its reporting by indication, APLD was the only source that could reveal treatment patterns. Without the benefit of APLD, the company may have missed this critical treatment dynamic and continued to pursue a much smaller market. Additionally, this information may have provided a significant advantage over competitors who were potentially unaware of this market dynamic.

**FIG. 1:
APLD IDENTIFIES OPPORTUNITIES TO
INFLUENCE UTILIZATION OF YOUR
BRAND IN THE MOST SUITABLE MANNER**

APLD-DRIVEN PATIENT-FLOW MODELS IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES TO MAXIMIZE UTILIZATION AT VARIOUS POINTS IN THE CONTINUUM OF CARE. COMPANIES CAN USE THIS INFORMATION TO DESIGN SPECIFIC MESSAGING AND TACTICS TO DRIVE OPTIMAL TREATMENT BEHAVIORS AT DISCRETE POINTS IN THE CONTINUUM.



APLD SPOTLIGHTS A KEY PATIENT SEGMENT IN THE PPI MARKET

For years, marketers have had to segment their patient populations with limited insight into real-world, evidence-based clinical information. They primarily had to rely on primary market research (which was sometimes limited by small sample sizes and inaccuracies related to physician and patient recall), in combination with dispensed prescription data to understand how product utilization varied by patient segment.

Today, APLD, which combines patient demographics with actual treatment statistics on millions of de-identified patients, present no such limitations. Companies can use APLD to identify distinct patient segments based on their disease attributes, treatment specifics and/or key demographics, and take their patient segmentations to a more sophisticated and comprehensive level. They can use this deep understanding of patients to market their product to the groups who would benefit the most from them — with messaging appropriate to each segment.

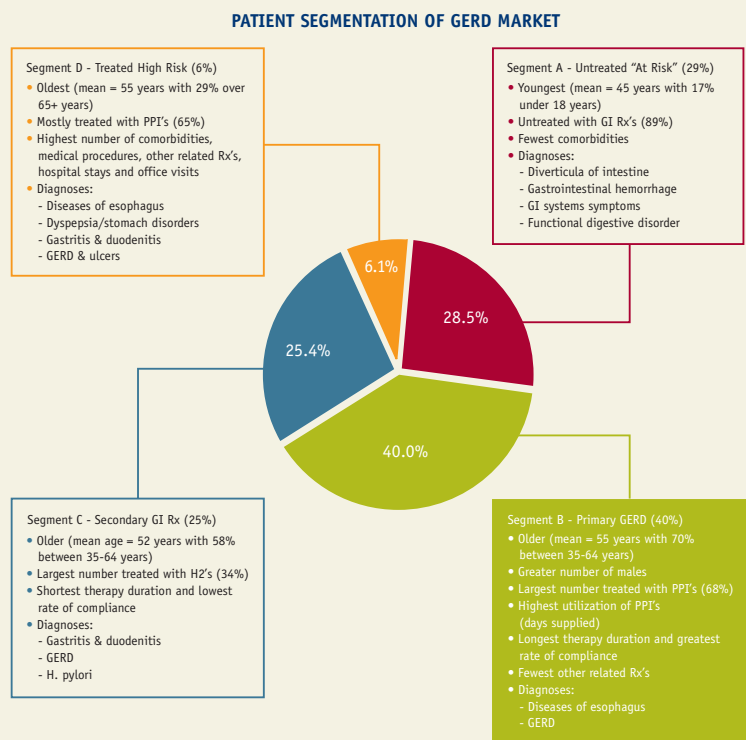
In the following example, a major player in the proton pump inhibitor (PPI) class used an APLD-driven patient segmentation approach to improve its performance in the gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD) market.

The company's brand team had observed that all products in the class were experiencing a high volume of patient switches (i.e., patients switching to and from their brand) and restarts (i.e., patients restarting their brand after quitting). They hypothesized that utilization varied significantly based on patients' clinical profiles. If this theory was borne out, the company intended to identify and concentrate its efforts on those segments that represented the highest current and potential value to its brand. The manufacturer leveraged APLD to segment the market and analyze actual utilization patterns within each segment.

The segmentation revealed four distinct patient segments characterized by different demographics, clinical factors and therapy usage. (See Fig. 2.) Segments B and D had the largest percent of patients treated with PPIs, and their

FIG. 2:
APLD ALLOWS PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANIES TO IDENTIFY AND CLEARLY ARTICULATE THE PATIENT SEGMENTS THAT WILL BENEFIT THE MOST FROM THEIR PRODUCTS

APLD-DRIVEN PATIENT SEGMENTATION ALLOWS COMPANIES TO BETTER UNDERSTAND HOW PATIENT TREATMENT NEEDS VARY BY SEGMENT IN THEIR MARKET, SO THAT THEY CAN IDENTIFY THE SEGMENTS THAT WOULD BENEFIT MOST FROM THEIR PRODUCT AND TAILOR POSITIONING AND MESSAGING ACCORDINGLY.



clinical characteristics indicated a good potential “fit” with the company’s product. Patients in Segment B, which represented 40 percent of the market, tended to be older, male and suffering from the fewest number of comorbidities. Most (68 percent) were treated with PPI’s, and this group registered the longest duration of therapy with the greatest rate of compliance. This segment, therefore, presented the greatest potential value of the brand.

Interestingly, the company learned that each brand in the PPI class had a relatively similar share of each segment. For example, if a brand had a six percent share of Segment A, it likely had a similar share of Segments B, C, and D. This suggested a lack of product differentiation between the available brands in the minds of physicians. The analysis of market shares across the segments also seemed to confirm that none of the company’s competitors had singled out Segment B as a high priority population, as no brand had a particularly dominant share.

The company was able to capitalize on its newfound knowledge of patients in Segment B by developing very tailored messaging for physicians. Rather than simply recommending that physicians use the brand for patients who suffer from GERD, the brand team designed physician messaging that described the specific clinical profile of the patients who would benefit most from the therapy (i.e., older patients, males, patients diagnosed with diseases of the esophagus, etc.).

As a subsequent step, the sales force could then use APLD to identify the segments of physicians who were treating patients in Segment B, and deliver these tailored messages to ensure that the right patients are receiving the right treatments at the right time. Then, both marketing and sales could monitor the success of the company’s revised strategy by measuring changes in product uptake among key segments of physicians.

APLD was the only information source that could provide the real-world, evidence-based clinical insights needed to identify and articulate the patient segments

that would benefit most from the brand. Using APLD, the company was in a position to differentiate its brand in a relatively undifferentiated market, leading to a potential advantage over competitors who were communicating a broad, general message. By enabling the brand team to take a more granular and sophisticated look at the market, APLD gave the company a significant marketing edge.

LIGHTING THE WAY TO COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

Because APLD sheds light on previously hidden aspects of the market, it offers new possibilities for companies to see opportunities more clearly and potentially seize a competitive advantage — and go beyond simply trying to steal share from competitors. Market assessments and competitive analyses can now include evidence-based details on the continuum of patient care—information that can be used to identify and fill unmet needs and competitive gaps. And marketers can now operate with a deeper understanding of the patients their products are meant to treat, enabling them to segment and communicate to them more effectively. Furthermore, APLD can be translated directly into sales strategies and tactics, ensuring a more cohesive, comprehensive, and effective approach to the market. ●

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