

# Market Needs Assessment: Qualitative Research Among Physicians

Case History

**Category:** *Pharmaceuticals*

**Methods:** *New Product Development, Qualitative Research, Physician Research*

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## Summary

A pharmaceutical company was interested in developing a new product for the treatment of a chronic disease. Exploratory research was utilized to understand current treatment patterns and needs among primary care physicians and specialists who treat the disease.

## Strategic Issues

In recent years, the healthcare industry has increased its focus on preventative treatments and the management of chronic diseases. Our pharmaceutical client was developing products to fit this need, with several promising therapies being considered for further development. Before spending millions on additional product development, our client wanted to conduct exploratory, qualitative research to understand physicians' needs and to help tailor additional product development and testing that would meet physicians' expectations regarding clinical endpoints.

## Research Objectives

The company wanted to measure interest and willingness to prescribe a new pharmaceutical product (in addition to recommending lifestyle changes).

Specific objectives included:

- Gaining knowledge on protocols used by physicians.
- Understanding how to influence doctors to try the product.
- Assessing the expectations regarding product insurance coverage.

## Research Design and Methods

A qualitative approach was used to better understand physicians' perceptions on the treatment of the chronic disease. Approximately 30 physicians were interviewed, including both primary care and specialist physicians. Each telephone interview was approximately 25 minutes in length. Participants were recruited from the Physicians Advisory Council®, Decision Analyst's proprietary panel of physicians worldwide.

## Results

The research uncovered key endpoints that a new product in this category would need to meet to gain physician interest and generate trial. The company plans to continue product development, focusing clinical-trial data collection on the key endpoints.

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