Keacyte

WHITE PAPER

Remote Detailing Isn’t a Backup Plan Anymore — It’s the New Standard

Overview

The Indian pharmaceutical industry is at a turning point. The introduction of the Uniform Code for Pharmaceutical Marketing Practices (UCPMP) 2024, followed by the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) 2025 directive, has permanently reshaped how life science companies engage with healthcare professionals (HCPs). With in-person visits by medical representatives (MRs) to central government hospitals now prohibited during working hours, traditional field interactions have been replaced by the need for compliant, digital-first engagement strategies. These regulations are designed to ensure ethical marketing, prevent undue influence, and protect patient care — while compelling the industry to rethink its outreach model.

This white paper explores how pharma organizations can navigate this shift and turn compliance into a competitive advantage. It examines the regulatory landscape, analyzes the impact on field force operations, and highlights best practices for adopting omnichannel engagement and remote detailing as core strategies. It also outlines how technology solutions — particularly industry-specific CRMs like Keacyte — can enable personalized, compliant, and measurable HCP engagement at scale. In this new environment, digital adoption is no longer optional; it is the standard for sustaining trust, ensuring compliance, and driving meaningful engagement.

The New Regulation

The Government of India introduced the Uniform Code for Pharmaceutical Marketing Practices (UCPMP) 2024 to ensure ethical business practices in pharmaceutical marketing that will lead to reduced commercial influence on clinical decisions in a government hospital set up.

Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) Directive (May 2025) is an operational enforcement of UCPMP. The DGHS directive banned Medical Representatives from entering central government hospitals and meeting doctors during working hours.

Objectives of the Ban

Prevent undue influence on Health Care Professionals (HCPs) regarding prescriptions of drugs and promoting ethical marketing.
Preventing disruptions in the hospital to avoid interruptions in patient care.
To ensure that no conflict of interest could affect the judgment of doctors through promotional tactics.
Maintaining professional integrity in the public healthcare settings.

Directive Overview

MRs are not permitted inside hospital premises.
The head of institutions must strictly enforce the ban and report compliance.
Life Science companies must now share updates digitally- via email or online platforms.

Impact on the Pharma Field Force

Restricted Access to HCPs

Sales reps can no longer meet doctors face to face in government hospitals.
There will be an impact on the direct communication with doctors and marketing activities.
Pharma companies need to rely on digital channels to share product information.

Disruption in call plans and targets

Existing call plans will be obsolete for government hospitals.
Sales targets will become harder to achieve due to reduced engagement opportunities with HCPs.

Reduced In-Person Relationship Building

In-person relationship building is highly impacted, which is a cornerstone of pharma marketing.
It is also hard to establish credibility without face-to-face interaction.

Industry Estimates

70% MR interactions go digital.
50% fewer in-person meets.
3× HCP reach via remote

Challenges

Information Gaps

In traditional settings, sales reps have been a primary source of updates on new drugs and related information. In the absence of direct interaction, there could be information gaps for doctors, and HCPs may miss out on timely updates about critical medicines.

Digital Engagement

Shifting to digital engagement will take time, and companies will have to invest time and money to train their field force. Digital literacy about engagement tools will take time to adopt by doctors as well as MRs.

Compliance with Regulations

The sales force needs to stay updated to avoid mistakes that could lead to fines and brand damage while following the UCPMP Guidelines.

Talent retention

The directive may lead to job losses, which will lead to job insecurity for MRs and will also make it challenging to attract suitable talent.

Sources: IQVIA Channel Dynamics (2024), “Top Customer Engagement Trends in Pharma” (IQVIA), and post-COVID digital outreach data (IQVIA)

The Digital Pivot

Omnichannel engagement is a customer-centric strategy that provides a personalized experience to HCPs across all available channels- both online and offline. Digital channels offer more outreach than a face-to-face interaction and are more cost-effective.

Multichannel Engagement

Life Science companies are actively using digital tools and platforms like emails, websites, and portals. Webinars, remote detailing, medical apps, etc.
It has become easy to leverage data and personalize the content as per HCPs' preferences. High-quality, evidence-based content can be used across various channels.

Remote Detailing

Remote detailing is also known as virtual or e-detailing. It involves a live, interactive video call where sales reps present product information, share content, and answer queries from HCPs.

Remote detailing Benefits

Compliance-Friendly

Doctors can schedule remote sessions at their convenience, eliminating MRs' visits and saving time.
Digital content is highly curated, approved, and compliant which reduces the risk of off-label promotions. Interactions can be recorded, and can be used for audits.
It aligns with UCPMP guidelines as it encourages information exchange and prohibits promotional gifts to doctors.

Data Tracking and Insights

Remote detailing platforms can track engagement metrics, like the type of content viewed, duration, frequency, etc.
The data can be utilized for Personalized content as per HCPs preference.
It also helps in assessing the performance of sales reps.

Outreach and Efficiency

With e-detailing, MRs can reach a larger number of HCPs as there is no geographical barrier.
Compared to personal visits, online detailing will reduce travel expenses and associated costs.
More e-meetings can be arranged as compared to in-person clinic visits on a daily basis.

Remote detailing and omnichannel engagement models are not temporary solutions but are an integral and permanent part of pharmaceutical marketing. They are pioneering the digital transformations in the healthcare ecosystem.

Digital Communication Tactics

In the evolving pharmaceutical landscape and with the implementation of stringent regulatory guidelines, Digital communication has become essential.

Personalized, Compliant, and Consent-based Email Marketing

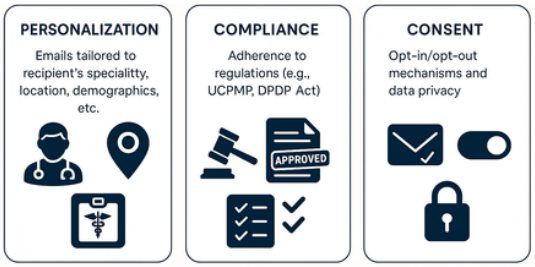
Email marketing is a basic fundamental choice for digital communication. It can be personalized based on HCPs specialty, interest, location, patient demographics, etc.
The email should provide relevant content as per HCPs requirements, and it could be clinical trial data or safety information, etc.

The email communication should adhere to UCPMP Guidelines, as it should not induce promotional benefits to doctors. It should give information about a drug's benefits, side effects, risks, contraindications, etc. All claims must be supported by scientific evidence and approved by regulatory bodies.

Emails should undergo internal medical, legal, and regulatory review before sharing with HCPs. The system should hold all the records for audit trails.

Opt-in/Opt-out consent should be crucial in marketing emails where doctors have a choice to opt in or out of receiving respective communications from pharma companies.

Pharma companies should also adhere to the Digital Personal Data Protection Act (DPDP Act), ensuring secure handling of personal data.



Digital Communication Strategy

Newsletters can be a regular content to educate and inform HCPs about the latest updates relevant to particular therapeutic areas.

E-sampling is a digital distribution of drug samples, and doctors can request them through online platforms. The system can verify the request and arrange the delivery of the sample. E-sampling is highly compliant as samples can be digitally tracked.

Doctor Education Portals are online go-to resources for HCPs for accessing scientific medical information. The content includes clinical study reports, videos, CME, virtual event recordings, FAQs, etc.

CRM Based Segmentation

The CRM stores data on each HCP, including demographics, content preferences, prescription patterns, and so on. Life Science companies can utilize this data to create micro-segmentation to reach out to specific HCPs with tailored and personalized content.

Tracking of engagement Metrics

CRM can track various engagement metrics like email metrics, website metrics, remote detailing metrics, content engagement type, etc., across all the digital channels.
Analyzing these metrics can shed light on HCPs' content preferences, channel preferences, and engagement levels, which will help strategize marketing activities.

Digital First Strategy: A New Approach

The traditional in-person meeting is obsolete in the new settings. The new regulation encourages digital strategies that respect time, provide value, and are highly compliant.

Building Trust

Building trust is paramount in the absence of in-person meetings, and it can only be strengthened through:

Content: High quality, evidence based medical content is the authentical source of information which includes clinical studies, guidelines, case studies, drug information and could be with different formats like videos, infographics, interactive modules. PDFs, etc.

Credibility: The content shared with doctors must undergo strict medical, legal, and regulatory review and provide unbiased information. Involvement of Key Opinion Leaders (KOLs) in content creation or review will enhance the trust.

Transparency: Pharma marketing practices should embrace ethical business practices, focusing on patient benefits over commercial influence. It should also provide a clear channel for collecting doctors' feedback, questions, etc.

Rooting Thought Leadership

Virtual platforms are crucial for establishing thought leadership and can be achieved through

Webinars: Webinars that focus on high-value scientific content that focuses on unmet medical needs, emerging research, and feature renowned experts can demonstrate thought leadership.

CMEs: Accredited CME programs can add significant value to doctors' knowledge and tackle relevant challenges related to particular therapeutic areas.

Value-Based Engagement through Medical Content

Life Science companies can strategically engage HCPs rather than simply selling the products. The medical content plays a key role in value-based engagement.

The medical content can focus on disease management that leads to better patient outcomes. The content can be aligned with national health programs relevant to government doctors.

Life Science companies can also explore opportunities for compliant partnerships with government healthcare bodies for training initiatives, health awareness campaigns, etc., and also can provide patient education materials, diagnostic tools. Etc.

Technology Solutions

A digital call plan, aligned with DGHP directives, solves engagement gaps of physical visits by shifting MRs from geographic coverage to managing digital HCP territories. Interactions focus on the right content, preferred channels, and meeting times, backed by training in virtual selling, digital content use, data interpretation, and compliance.

Engagement Calendars

Remote tools schedule weekly/monthly interactions, with CRM sending invites for emails, webinars, and remote detailing. Digital platforms support collaboration, feedback, and content strategy.

CRM Integration for Productivity & Compliance

CRM tracks engagement volume, call duration, and preferences while ensuring automated content approvals and audit trails. Systems remain UCPMP-compliant for transparency.

Recommended Tools

Remote Detailing Platforms:
Interactive virtual detailing with video, screen sharing, chat, recording, and CRM integration (e.g., Teams, Zoom for healthcare).

Doctor Engagement CRM:
Centralizes data for personalized engagement and interaction tracking.

Key Recommendations

- Invest in omnichannel engagement tools
- Upskill field teams for virtual communication
- Track engagement quality, not just volume
- Leverage data insights for targeted follow-ups

Keacyte Capabilities

Keacyte CRM is specifically tailored for the life science industry, with its core functionality including

HCP Management

A comprehensive database that stores all information about HCPs and historic interactions. It provides a unified view of HCP interactions across various channels. Granular segmentation of HCPs can be utilized for targeted messaging.

Email Automation

Enables personalized emails and sales reps can share pre-approved, compliant emails directly to HCPs.

Omnichannel Capabilities

Supporting e-detailing with interactive video calls for virtual meetings, allowing MRs to showcase the approved content.

Approved Emails and Content Management

It ensures that all the emails, marketing, and medical content used by the sales reps are centrally managed and pre-approved by Medical, Legal, and Regulatory teams, adhering to UCPMP guidelines.

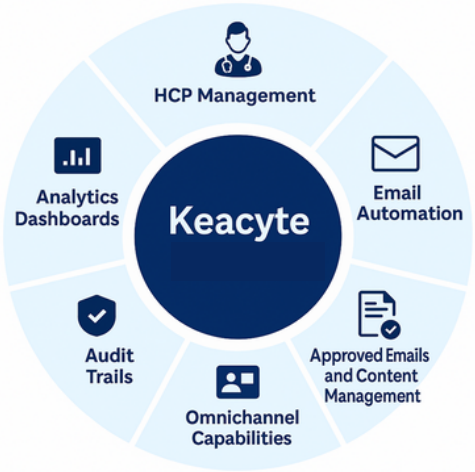
Audit trails

It captures all logging interactions, content usage, making it audit-ready for regulatory inspections.

Analytics Dashboards

Keacyte offers up-to-date reports and analytics dashboards to provide insights into customer interactions and field activity. Managing call planning, tracking interaction activity, or sales performance monitoring can be smoothly accessed.

Customizable dashboards to visualize key performance indicators (KPIs) relevant to different hierarchies of management.



Case Study

From Visits to Value: Empowering Sales with Omnichannel Tools

Business Context

A global top ten pharma company was looking to implement a CRM solution that would also provide a strong e-Detailing platform for one of their divisions in India.

Challenges Faced

The field force in this division required an “easy to use” solution. The company was keen on empowering their field force by providing them greater detailing capability with dynamic scientific content, and more accessible training content. They were not able to achieve this. Being a global top ten company, they also wanted high levels of data security.

Our Solution

We offered our Keacyte – CRM with e-Detailing as a platform that would help them meet their objectives. A strong pre-requisite for the client was ease of use, and state-of-art e-Detailing content delivery. We implemented the following modules:

- Call Planning
- Call Reporting
- e-Detailing
- Coaching
- e-Learning

With training, users could adopt our solution quickly. Since Keacyte follows standard data security features, we met the client needs on this front.

Benefits from our Solution

- User-friendly User Interface meant that we reached 100% adoption in a short time.
- Better call planning led to calls with more preparation and better delivery.
- e-Detailing improved doctor engagement time.
- Keacyte enabled availability of relevant data for better decisions, especially with real-time data from e-Detailing.
- Keacyte helped in improving overall field force efficiency.

Conclusion

The shift in the regulation of marketing practices is influenced by the UCPMP 2024 DGHS directives 2025. The Life Science companies need to adapt to this changing scenario and upgrade their marketing practices and align with the new regulations to ensure ethical business practices.

Digital adaptation is not a temporary adjustment but a permanent solution to the current regulations. Life Science companies need to strategically invest in the right tools to match the current demands of virtual interactions, and also to prioritize training to the field force for the new change.

Field force CRM like Keacyte offers a unique blend of automation and content management to align with the current regulatory changes.

Remote detailing and omnichannel were an alternative during the pandemic era but now have become an essential component of the healthcare ecosystem. Companies that fail to adapt to the new changes will lose their competitive edge and relevance.

Life Science companies need to focus on building doctors' trust and engaging HCPs with the right tools and technology, which are also aligned with the changing regulatory scenario.

It is a strategic move for the Life Science industry to adopt digital changes due to demanding regulations, and it is a new standard now!

About Us

Keacyte

At Keacyte, we simplify regulatory compliance and drive commercial excellence for the life sciences industry. Our solutions empower pharma and biotech companies with advanced CRM for healthcare professionals and secure content management. Trusted by 50+ customers worldwide, we deliver fast, scalable applications that enable rapid value, commercial success, and innovation."

For more info visit: www.keacyte.com

© 2025 VSM Software Pvt. Ltd. All Rights Reserved.