



PHM
**HEALTH
FRONT:**

**2026
TRENDS
AND
INSIGHTS**

DISCOVER THE MODERN HEALTH EXPERIENCE



Letter from PHM CEO Andrea Palmer

It is bittersweet for me to bring you this look back at the 2026 PHM HealthFront, as it means my two favorite days of the year are in the rearview. And while those sessions, Masterclasses and conversations may have ended, I know the bright future they imagined is still on the horizon.

Each year, the HealthFront marks a pivotal moment for our community. An opportunity for us to gather, to investigate new theories and to explore the future of healthcare marketing, made possible by the collaboration of our clients, partners, sponsors and colleagues who believe, as we do, that progress happens when bold ideas meet shared ambition.

As I said onstage, healthcare is evolving faster than the systems designed to market it. New science, new technologies, new platforms and rapidly shifting expectations are reshaping how information is found and acted upon. At HealthFront, we dove into that reality. We explored how AI is reinventing engagement, how platforms are becoming decision engines and why discovery has become the true measure of impact in modern healthcare marketing.

Leadership in this next era will belong to those willing to challenge convention, test new models and build unexpected partnerships. The innovators and pioneers featured at HealthFront share a common belief — that healthcare marketing does not have to operate as it always has — and their insights and perspectives are among the many in this report that we've compiled to continue these conversations.

Thank you, as always, for your time and collaboration.

Andrea



CONNECTION AS THE NEW CURRENCY

The Disruption

As consumers tap new and diverse sources for health information, authority has dispersed, leading to a paradox introduced by Kelly Millett, Head of Audience Experience Design, PHM, in panel "The Architecture of Influence: How to Build Scalable Narratives When Authority Lives Everywhere," saying, "influence is harder to control and all the more necessary and critical to design. When influence is everywhere, it's not something you borrow, it's something you design."

That design, however, needs to be extremely nuanced; Akinwale Garrett, CEO, BlackDoctor.org noted, "it is not a one-size-fits-all approach. Understanding the nuances of culture and how that actually drives people to action is really key. We are not in a monolithic society." Leah Wyar, President, Entertainment and Beauty & Style Group, People Inc., agreed, saying, "we all have those micro-mediums now, and you can still get mass reach in a much more niche way, which can have more impact if done right."

The Opportunity

Reach is not the resource it once was; instead, breakthrough brands look to design connection by pursuing the golden standard: authenticity.

Jaime-Lynn Sigler, actress, advocate and author, spoke to her experience sharing her MS diagnosis publicly after 15 years navigating her condition quietly. Addressing what patients want to hear from media and health marketing, she shared, "(w)hat I'm learning more and more – people want the real. They want the authenticity. We want to know about treatments and resources, but people also just want to be acknowledged for their experience. When we get specific about the things we're dealing with, the message becomes universal. We all have hurdles we're experiencing every day, so when you're authentic, real, and highlighting the full experience – it allows everyone in."



*Jamie Lynn Sigler,
Actress, Advocate, and
Newly Minted Author*



*Akinwale Garrett, CEO,
BlackDoctor Inc*

*Leah Wyar, President,
Entertainment and Beauty
& Style Group, People, Inc.*





Alex Rodriguez, Chairman & CEO, A-Rod Corp, Co-Chairman, Minnesota Timberwolves, Lynx

Vernon Davis, Super Bowl Champion, Entrepreneur, and Producer

Chaunte Lowe, 4-Time Olympian, Public Speaker & Host of The Lowe Point

Ken Griffey, Sr., Legendary MLB All-Star & Champion



LOOKING BEYOND THE GAME

The Disruption

While sports has been heralded as the last live mass media format, the cultural cachet extends far beyond 'just' game adjacency. One of the biggest transformations has been the role of athletes in the expanding sports universe, as pointed out by Chloe Pastore, President, Strategic Alliances & Partnerships, Publicis Groupe Sports, "athletes are no longer showing up as competitors or spokespeople but as creators, storytellers and entrepreneurs, reshaping how brands connect with emerging media and establishing ecosystems of shared trust and authenticity on and off the field."

This entrepreneurial approach was echoed by keynote speaker Alex Rodriguez, CEO, A-Rod Corp (not to mention 14x MLB All-Star and a 2009 World Series Champion), saying, "athletes today have never been more ambitious and smarter" and as such "sports has done better than almost every other investment vehicle... there's an octopus of media opportunities when you buy into these businesses."

The Opportunity

Partnerships with individual athletes are primed for deep resonance as athletes have built trust over time, having publicly navigated the daily demands it takes to stay well in their field. Shared Chaunte Lowe, Olympic Medalist & World-Class High Jumper for Team USA, "when you take the time to get to know the athlete...you can find those areas of synergy and find those great partnerships that resonate deeply with the audience."

Addressing this opportunity, an exclusive product presented at HealthFront:



Deron Guidrey, Co-Founder & CEO, PlayersTV

PLAYERS TV

HEALTHLETE
Athlete-Driven Health Media

HealthLete is the first athlete-powered health media and adtech platform, powered by PlayersTV in partnership with PHM. Created to transform how pharmaceutical brands connect with people through authentic storytelling, precision targeting and measurable outcomes, HealthLete delivers scalable, data-driven media experiences across premium environments like CTV, OLV, social and retail media.



BUILDING A NEW FOUNDATION OF TRUST WITH HCPs

The Disruption

The HCP audience, by nature small and incredibly consequential, continues to be served by outdated methods causing adverse consequences: message saturation, mental burden and added frustration. The result? More spend, less breakthrough.

Jason Patterson, Chief Analytics Officer, PHM, pointed to the need for greater standardization among HCP data to change this narrative, introducing PHM's own validation framework created in partnership with the Alliance for Audited Media (AAM) saying, "the stakes of getting (this) wrong are real and yet the standards we use to evaluate whether we have reached HCPs have not kept pace with our industry." Katrina Eddy, VP, Tech Assurance, AAM, reinforced the importance of these standards, adding, "when we look at earning trust, one of the policies we follow is validating the underlying process of how data is being obtained and then we take a look to see if that performance happened. It's the accuracy of that doctor and the validity of that ad being served."

The Opportunity

Also addressing how best to support a taxed HCP audience, Daniel Nadler, Founder of Open Evidence, interviewed Haider Warraich, MD, Program Manager/Scalable Solutions Office, Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health, a U.S. federal agency established to accelerate high-risk, high-reward health breakthroughs. Dr. Warraich pointed to the government's willingness to adopt an AI physician, adding, "the fact that AI scribes are a successful business shows the types of burdens clinicians face that have nothing to do with care. We need all the help we can get, so if AI can help me do more, I think that's amazing and won't reduce the need for clinicians. It's not a replacement function — it's a force multiplier and extender." Echoing a similar need for validation frameworks, he clarified that in this new system "clinical guidelines are going to become even more important. Teams will link outputs of this technology to a guideline."



*Vincent Muehter,
President, Formedics*

*Jason Patterson, Chief
Analytics Officer, PHM*



*Daniel Nadler, Founder,
OpenEvidence*





Ben Grosse, Partnerships + Growth, Profound

CP McBee, North American AI Advertising Director, Microsoft

NEW PATHS TO DISCOVERY

The Disruption

Several panels explored the evolution of discovery in the AI age. Transformative growth leader Esi Bracey pointed to AI as an audience in modern marketing, "to win hearts and minds, you have to win machines. How you show up on machines is quite different... You have to capture hearts but you have to be ingestible, preferred by machines so people can appreciate you."



Google's proprietary research pointed to the messy middle of AI-powered discovery in action. On AI transforming health literacy, Lois-An Gregory, Strategy & Insights, Google highlighted the anomaly: "(health) literacy is low, but curiosity is at an all-time high. Because patients aren't just sitting around waiting for the maze to resolve itself — they're taking things into their own hands to fill that understanding gap themselves." Mandi Ciocca, VP, Performance Content, PMX expanded this notion, "The journey is unique and people are using many experiences all at once" with CP McBee, North American AI Advertising Director, Microsoft adding "healthcare and pharma queries are continuing to grow and 84% of healthcare journeys begin with traditional search. With Copilot and Bing, we are seeing a "better together" story...we are seeing a holistic integrated journey coming together."

Lois-An Gregory, Strategy & Insights, Health & Wellness, Google



Esi Bracey, Transformative Growth Leader & Former CMGO of Unilever

Alison McConnell, CMO, PHM

The Opportunity

While exposure alone isn't enough to resolve the issue, Stefani Klaskow, Industry Director, Google, pointed to the path forward, "the space between "I have the info" and "I know what to do next" is where there's opportunity for us right now."

While search is experiencing massive change, so is another traditional channel for discovery: video, which has become increasingly fragmented, leading to a disconnect in what consumers need vs. what we are delivering. One panel proposed an initial solve: reworking the video measurement framework. Robert Johnstone, Senior Director, DTC VBU, GSK, explained, "How can we help as many people as possible with the resources we have? The old ways of measuring can get you so far [but] we need to dig deeper and embrace the complexity of data." Search marketers echoed this same sentiment, with Mandi Ciocca commenting "we need to pivot the metric of what performance means."



RETAIL REWRITES ITS FUTURE

The Disruption

The available points of care have been on the rise since the pandemic, but have experienced a veritable explosion in recent years, leading to new consumer expectations. With more direct paths to care available, retail experiences play an even more significant role in the patient journey, even as retail faces the same challenges of discovery as other industries. As indicated by Publicis Groupe Chief Commerce Strategy Officer Jason Goldberg, “(w)e are living through this incredible paradox. The customer has never had more sources of information, more ways to discover products, more touchpoints on their path to purchase than ever before. At the same time, she’s never been more confused and less trustful than she is right now.” To build that trust, marketers, like Jonathan Halvorson, MBA, Chief Digital & Marketing Officer, Kenvue, are looking to “solve for the individual human and the more we can do to put the info into the right context will enable the superior product to win.”

The Opportunity

The consensus at HealthFront was that all advancements in retail and digital paths to care must be laser-focused on customer experience above all else. Zachary Dennett, Vice President, Merchandising, CVS Health spoke to the incredibly high stakes, constantly asking “which retailers are solving customers’ needs? Which retailers are resonating with consumers? Are we doing what consumers want?”

Eric Trepanier, Chief HCP Officer, PHM and Jessica Shepherd, MD, MBA, FACOG, hers, discussed the way access’s evolution from a linear path to one with “10,000 front doors” can provide opportunity, not impediment, with Dr. Shepherd suggesting “access is the new healthcare equity,” and that this new system emerged as something had to be done to “disrupt the health system, which can lead to a better form of healthcare... The customer experience is the best way to see outcomes. The better the experience, the more a patient is understood — it will allow them to make the best choice for themselves.”



Zachary Dennett, Vice President, Merchandising, CVS Health

Jonathan Halvorson, MBA, Chief Digital & Marketing Officer, Kenvue

Jason Goldberg, Chief Commerce Strategy Officer, Publicis



Jessica Shepherd, MD, MBA, FACOG, Chief Medical Officer, hers

Eric Trepanier, Chief HCP Officer, PHM





Delanie Walker, 3-Time Pro Bowler & NFL Legends Coordinator

Denise Campbell, VP Marketing Strategy, US Oncology & Enterprise Partnerships, Novartis

CHANGING CULTURE TO CHANGE MINDS

The Disruption

As consumers engage with new channels at all points on their patient journey, media's role needs to expand in lockstep with these behaviors, moving from marketing funnels to moments of consideration. Two panels explored different approaches to tapping into – or even changing – culture to improve health outcomes.

Novartis' "Relax, It's a Blood Test" turned an insight into engagement in men's health, as Denise Campbell, VP Marketing Strategy, US Oncology & Enterprise Partnerships, Novartis noted, "there are tons of conversations around men not going to the doctor so we start(ed) the conversation around the discomfort and the anxiety. We have to break that anxiety and be culturally relevant, so we thought humor might be a good place to start." Featured talent Delanie Walker, 3x Pro Bowl & NFL Legends Coordinator, felt a real responsibility to create this change, sharing "we always put our health on the backburner and we'll act like we'll get to it later but we never get to it. When the guys I grew up with saw that I was able to be upfront about prostate cancer and do this commercial that was funny and made you think 'what just happened?' — people wanted to be part of it." The impacts of this work were near immediate, both in cultural conversation and in increased screening, added Denise Campbell, "for us, we're just getting started."

The Opportunity

While tapping into culture can require new ways of working for some brands, the north star for resonance is authenticity, as spotlighted by Botox for Chronic Migraine's The Shift, a three-part series of mini episodes inspired by The Pitt. J. Carter, Associate Marketing Director, Botox Migraine, AbbVie explained why this concept was relevant for the current moment, saying "we understood that innovation was something we needed for a 16-year-old brand (and) meeting patients where they are is always the goal." Onscreen talent (and real-world RN) Aaron Archilla noted the revolutionary nature of his casting in such creative, "it would do well for any brand to share the stories of people actually using (the) product. That in and of itself gives transparency and authenticity instead of hiring someone and telling them what to do and what to say. (As a nurse,) patients don't relate to you because of your credibility. They see themselves in you and we have to be empathetic and connect with patients." This investment in credible human voices is an approach to build relevance and cohesion while entering the cultural zeitgeist.



David Michael, Creative Director, Writer, Director, Producer

J. Carter, Associate Marketing Director, Botox Migraine, AbbVie



Denise Campbell, VP Marketing Strategy, US Oncology & Enterprise Partnerships, Novartis



MASTERCLASSES

This year, we welcomed eleven masterclasses as experts shared their unique perspectives on our industry's most pressing issues.

survivor^{net}

What Patients and Doctors Are Really Asking: Two Years of AI-Driven Health Intelligence

Steve Alperin, CEO, SurvivorNet
Imran Qureshi, CTO, B.well

People Inc.

Beyond Survival: Reframing the Modern Condition Experience

Dria Barnes, General Manager, SVP & Head of Strategic Partnerships, Health, People Inc.
Melissa Jenkins, Community Director, Breastcancer.org
Ingrid Eberly, Patient Advocate

PULSEPOINT®

More Effective DTC: So You Don't Subsidize Your Competitors

Keith Matt, GVP of Sales, PulsePoint

+ GoodRx

The Power of Utility in an AI-Driven Healthcare Landscape

Ellen Blum Hager, VP Pharma Solutions, GoodRx
Suzie Eckhart, VP Audience & Platform, GoodRx

docere⁶

Why Physicians Filter Pharma Out - And What it Takes to Get Through: A Clinical Reality Check for Healthcare Marketers

Bryan O'Keefe, Business Director, Doceree



How to Make Your HCP Lists Work Harder - Without Rebuilding Them

Jordan Osborne, Associate Director of Client Experiences, Phreesia Network Solutions
Sarah Bast, EVP, Investment Marketplace, PHM



MASTERCLASSES



Aging Around: Rethinking Aging & Connecting with Today's Older American

Michelle Green, Manager, Global Ad Marketing & Intelligence, Paramount

Alexander Cammy, Senior Manager of Global Ad Marketing and Intelligence, Paramount

Health Monitor

The Attention Equation: What HCPs Open, Click and Ignore

Gwen Park, SVP and Head of Pharma Sales and Marketing, Health Monitor Network

Maryam Lustberg, MD, MPH

Monique Landrum, Omnichannel & Digital Marketing Lead, UCB

deepintent

When Every Patient Counts: How Synchronized HCP and DTC Execution Drives Measurable Outcomes in Rare Disease

Jennifer Loga, VP Media Measurement & Analytics, DeepIntent

swoop

Feed the Beast: Scaling Human Connection in an AI-Powered World

Eric Peacock, Co-founder and President of MyHealthTeam and Chief Patient Officer, Swoop

ReachMD

The Sound of Medicine: Why Audio Leads - and Omnichannel Follows

Ryan Miller, Sr. Strategic Account Director, ReachMD



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