

Time Sets the *Tempo*



Healthcare Professionals
Want Quality Content and
Fewer Interruptions in 2020

Introduction

Welcome to HealthLink Dimensions' 2020 HCP Communications Survey. This annual industry overview delivers the insights that marketers and recruiters need to reach top healthcare talent and purchasing decision-makers with targeted campaigns that deliver accurate, replicable results.

This year's respondents indicate that time is a primary concern. For marketers, that means that outreach across pharmaceutical, device, biotech, or healthcare marketing must deliver quality, unbiased content to generate results. For recruiters, it means searches that make job transitions as fast, easy, and nonintrusive as possible for talent seeking new opportunities.



Here are the key takeaways:

- Healthcare providers demand respect – for their knowledge, their experience, and the ever-increasing demands on their time
- Marketing and recruiting outreach that delivers quality information with minimal time demands will generate higher engagement

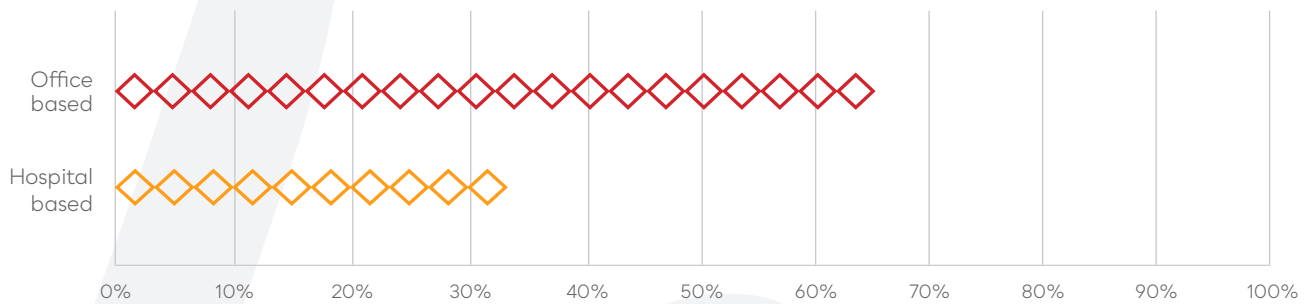
Healthcare providers are bombarded with marketing and recruiting every day, leading to message fatigue across the industry. Outreach that helps providers and purchasers get the information or jobs that they want quickly and efficiently, from sources they can trust as reliable and unbiased, will have a decided advantage in 2020. Untargeted broadcast has run its course. Marketing and recruiting now require more sophisticated data, segmentation, outreach, and reporting tools to generate appropriate levels of response.

Here's what the numbers say.

Most Respondents Work in Office-Based Practices

This year's respondents work in office-based rather than hospital-based environments by a 2 to 1 margin. Primary care represents the largest provider category, with 41% indicating that they practice internal medicine, family medicine, adolescent medicine, or pediatrics.

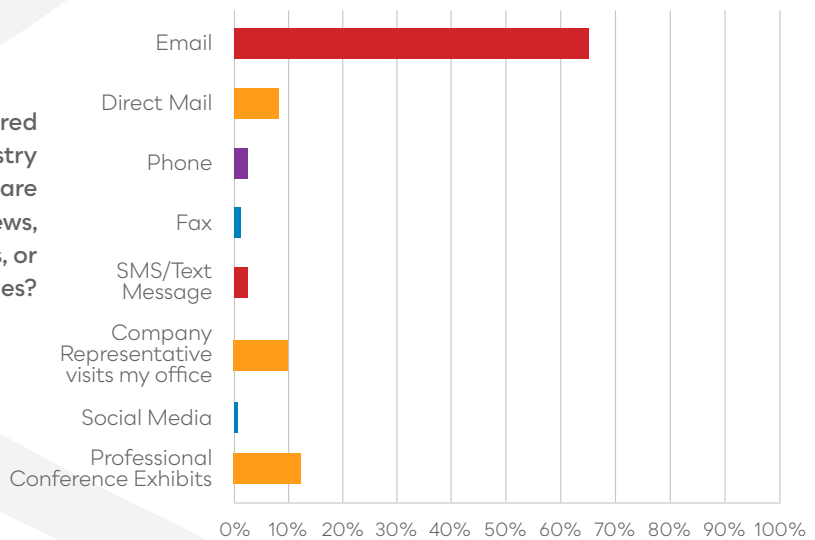
Q1 What is your primary practice setting?



Email Dominates for Outreach

Despite predictions of its demise, most respondents still prefer email as their primary communications method for industry news, product updates, and research/educational opportunities. Direct access via company representatives or professional conferences were the closest alternatives, but both trailed email by a substantial margin.

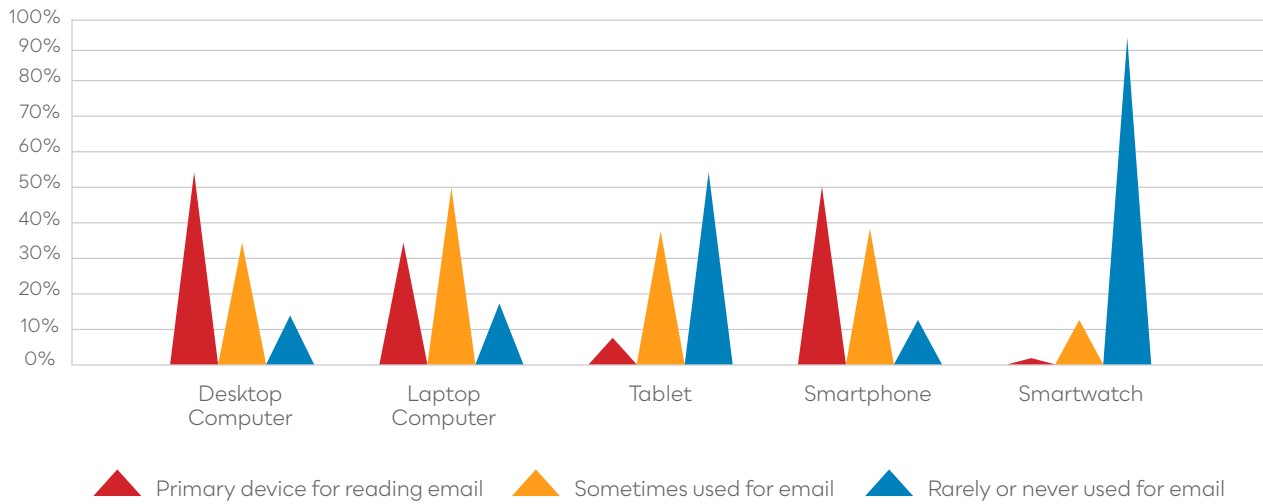
Q3 Which method below is your preferred method of communication from industry (Pharmaceutical, Medical Device, Healthcare Insurance) to inform you of industry news, product updates and announcements, or research and educational opportunities?



The Rise of Smartphones

Desktops and laptops remain the choice for email, but smartphone usage nearly matches those levels of usage. This continued evolution towards smaller mobile devices means that outreach must be consistently branded, as well as equally readable and useful, on any size screen. Responsive design is a must. So is reporting that tracks which providers prefer each type of contact so that each individual receives the kind of outreach that they find most useful and convenient.

Q4 Which devices do you use to read email? Please rank each device according to use.



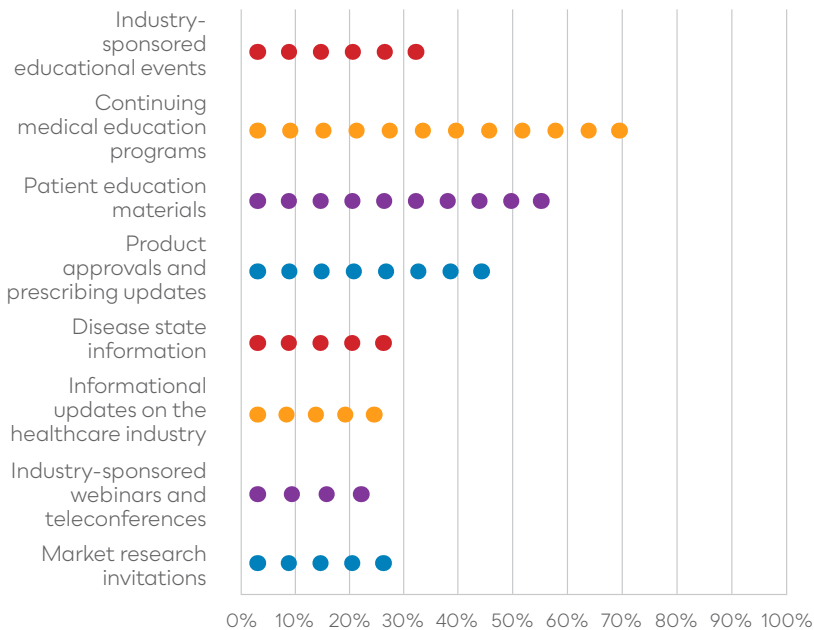
Content Remains King

Providers want to know more, especially from pharmaceutical and medical device manufacturers. In particular, they want to know about continuing education programs and product approvals. Industry-sponsored webinars and teleconferences and market research invitations generated the least amount of enthusiasm, reflecting a general trend towards unbiased information that directly impacts daily operations.

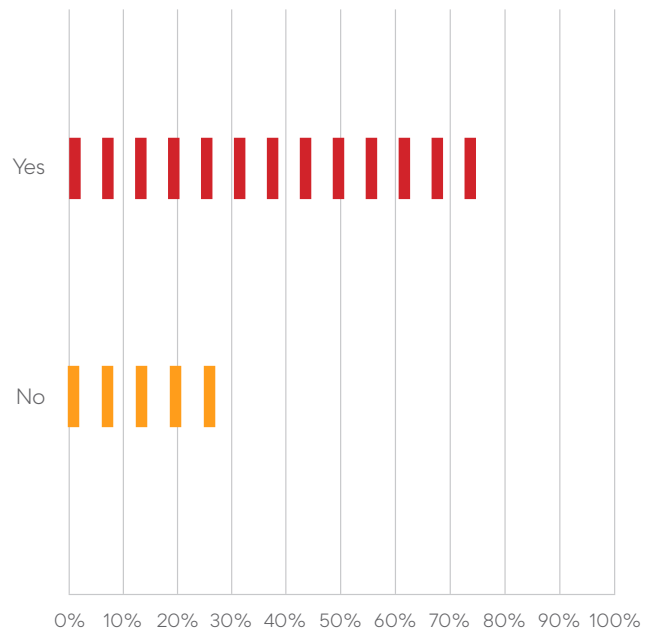


Providers also need access to patient education materials that help free up time in the practice for other, clinically driven tasks. Almost 75% of respondents indicated that they use these materials when provided by healthcare companies and patient advocacy organizations.

Q5 What type of information do you prefer to receive from Pharmaceutical and Medical Device manufacturers? Select all that apply:



Q7 Do you use patient education and support materials provided by healthcare companies and patient advocacy organizations?

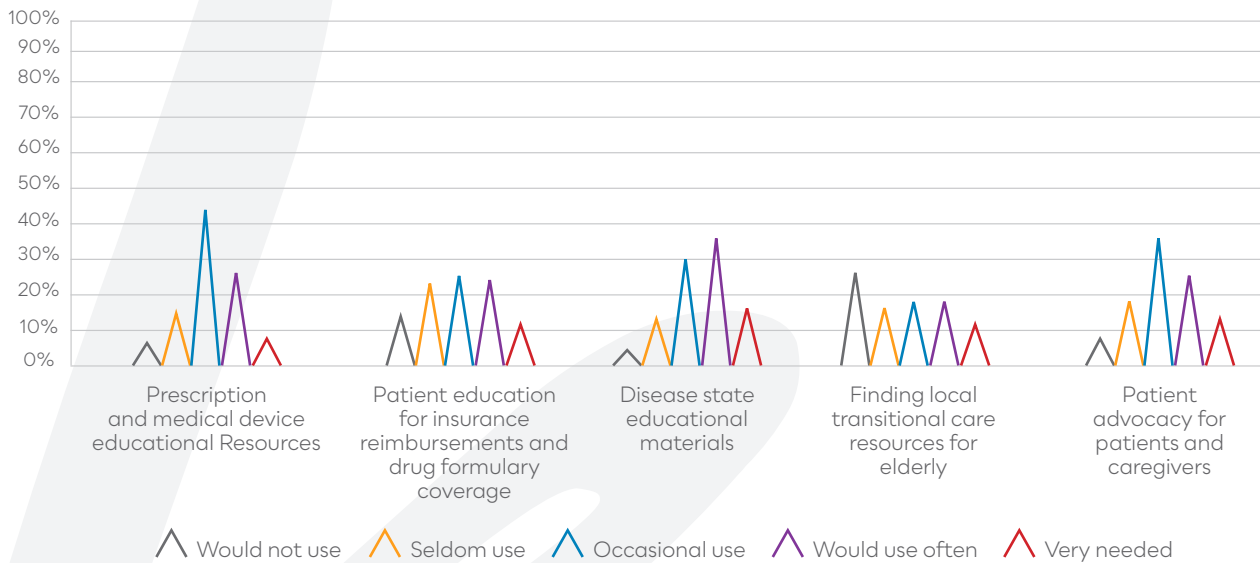


Patient Support Is Essential

Not surprisingly, providers want to help their patients with timely, accurate information. Disease state education materials lead the way, followed closely by prescription and medical device educational resources.

Providers also want more direct means to assist patients, with 55% seeking ways to provide patient education for insurance reimbursements and drug formulary coverage. At the same time, finding local transitional care carries a low priority, perhaps indicating the lack of awareness of simple, useful directories that accelerate this process.

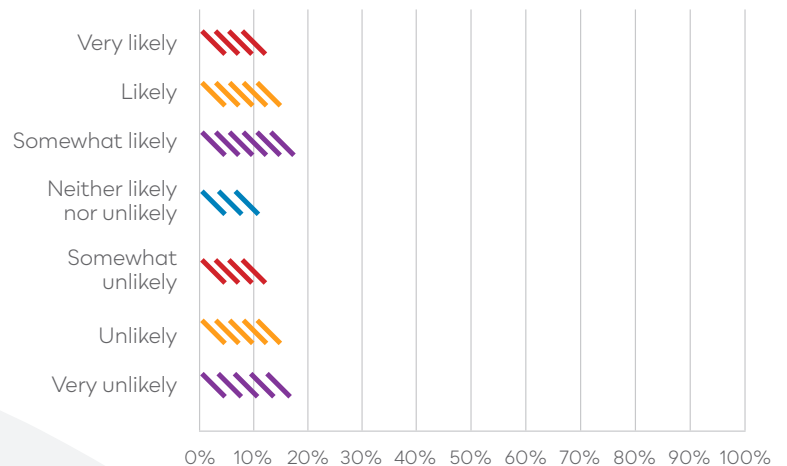
Q8 Please rate the following types of patient support in terms of how useful they are for your practice.



Mobile Patient Education Grows In Importance

47% of respondents say they are very likely, likely, or somewhat likely to use mobile technology, including mobile apps, to support patients with relevant information. This percentage will grow over time, as increasing proportions of patients and providers use smartphones and other mobile devices as their primary means for communication.

Q9 How likely are you to use mobile technology (such as a mobile app) to distribute patient support information and education?



Providers Want Control Over Their Time

Email overwhelmingly dominates as the preferred method of contact when it comes to invitations for webinars, teleconferences, or educational events. Direct phone solicitation comes in a distant last. In short, providers want to receive these solicitations via media where they can quickly choose to read them (or not) when it's most convenient.

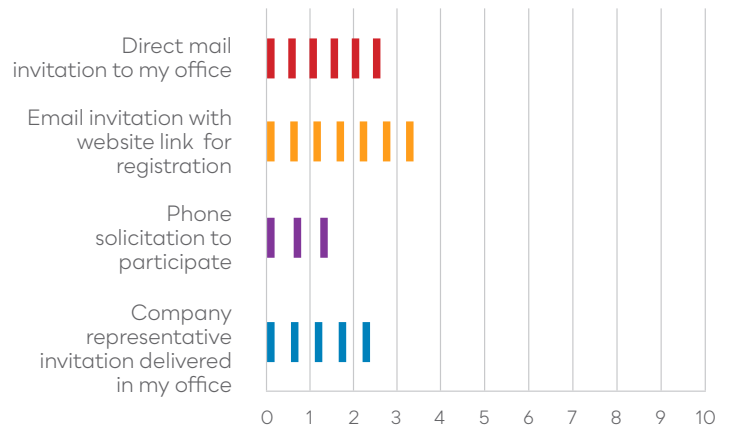
They Also Want Trusted, Unbiased Information

Providers spend considerable amounts of time researching online in support of their practices, with 94% of respondents indicating they consume professional information outside of work. Trust is essential, with 68% of respondents stating their unwillingness to engage with healthcare content on a non-healthcare website.

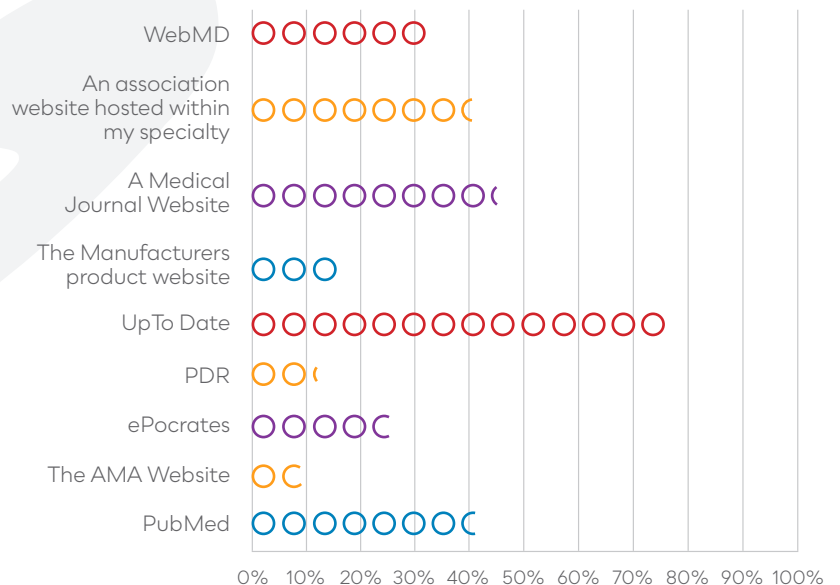
UpToDate, PubMed, medical journal websites, and specialty association websites dominate the online resources providers use when seeking online healthcare information, with UpToDate the clear favorite. The most frequent responses followed a similar pattern when asked which types of communications from life sciences organizations might be helpful:

- New products/treatments via drugs, devices, or procedures
- Conference and continuing education opportunities
- Trustworthy, unbiased medical journals and publications
- Alerts on drug interactions and potential medical errors
- Updates on new research, disease states and guidelines

Q6 Which type of invitations for webinar, teleconference, or educational events are you most likely to read and respond to? Please rank from 1-Most likely to respond to 4- Least likely to respond.



Q10 When seeking online information related to healthcare products, medical devices, or disease state knowledge, which websites do you most commonly visit? Select all that apply:



However, outreach must not be too frequent or overtly connected to sales pitches. While 61% of respondents are receptive to digital healthcare advertising, these connections must deliver quality information. Unhelpful or annoying communications include:

- Unsolicited emails or phone calls
- “Helpful hints” that disguise sales efforts
- Multiple, overly frequent email messaging
- Misleading or out-of-date information
- Embedded ads that don’t deliver value for the click-through

These results indicate a clear pattern. Healthcare professionals have limited time for marketing or recruiting outreach. Respect for their time and delivering informative and educational content increases response and engagement.

Q14 What type(s) of communications from life science organizations do you appreciate and consider helpful?

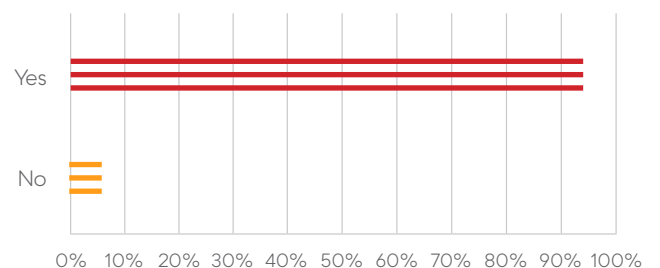
disease medical changes care NA new products
guidelines products New patient updates
New research email education None drug
information journal articles Educational data
specific journal conferences new studies



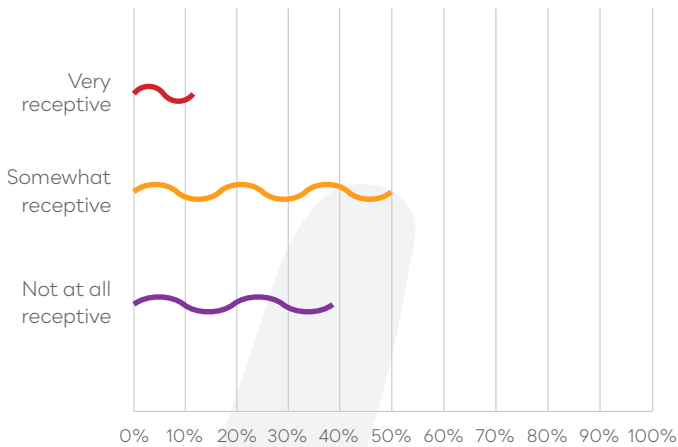
Q15 What type(s) of communications from life science organizations do you find unhelpful or even annoying?

Advertisements patients email new
phone calls call mail marketing
None meetings ads Things
information drug NA products

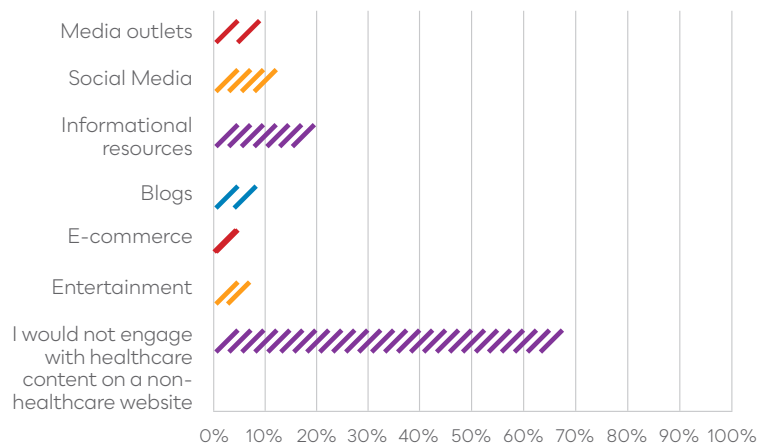
Q16 Do you consume professional information (articles, journals, videos, etc.) when you are not at work?



Q17 How receptive are you to professional content in the form of digital advertising from pharmaceutical, medical device, or other healthcare organizations?



Q18 Would you respond to professional healthcare advertising when viewing non-healthcare content on any of these types of websites/platforms?"

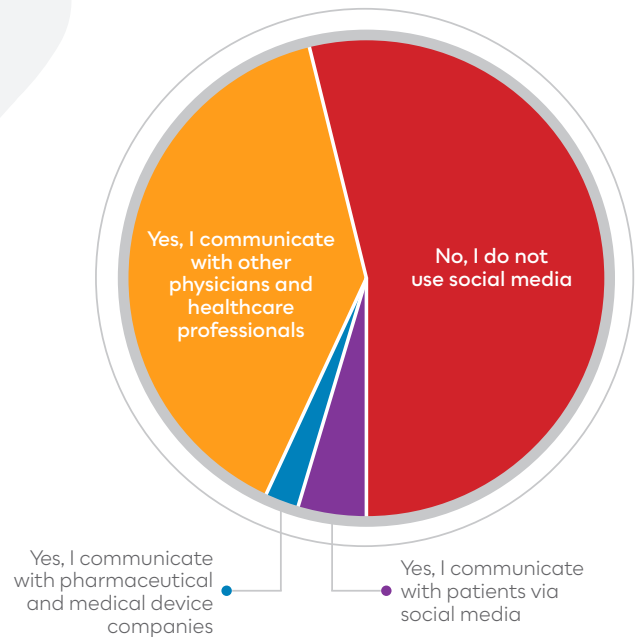


Social Networking Remains A Work in Progress

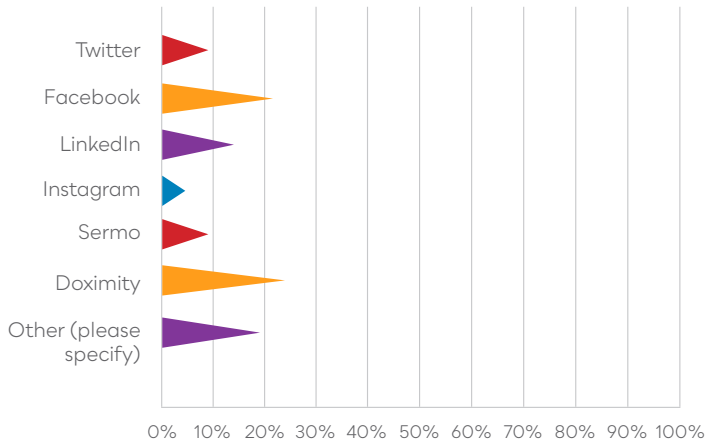
More than 46% of respondents participate in social networking for professional purposes, which shows a solid increase over 2019's response of 34%. Most of these communications reflect peer groups rather than patient contact or connections to pharmaceutical or medical device companies. Given that younger providers rely on social media more than their older cohorts, the percentage who use social networking should grow throughout 2020 and into the future. 61% of respondents see value in social media and plan to participate in the future.

Interestingly, more respondents use Doximity than other social media outlets. And yet, both Facebook and LinkedIn have active participation – presumably within sections of these providers that cater to healthcare or specialty conversations. The “Other” category received a large number of “None” responses, indicating that the social media outlets in this chart represent the most used among healthcare providers.

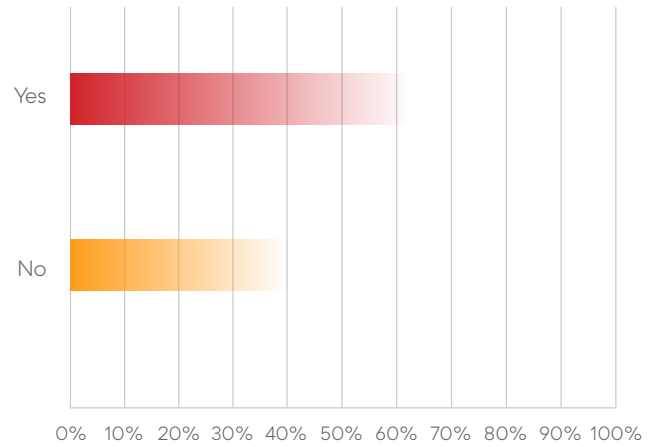
Q11 Do you participate in social networking sites for professional purposes?



Q12 Which social or professional networks do you actively participate in?



Q13 Do you see value in social media and plan to participate in the future?

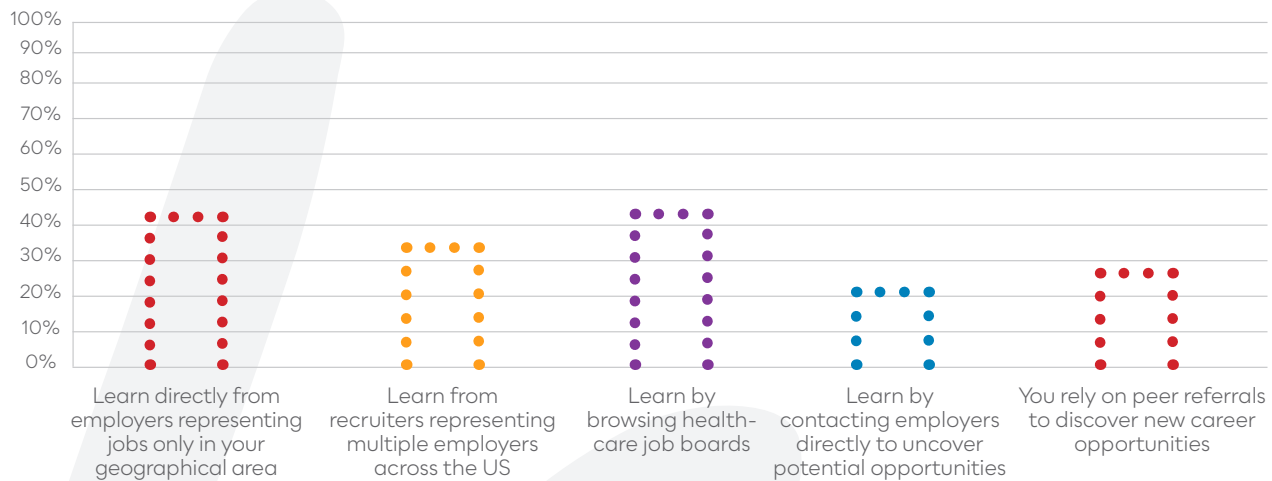


Healthcare Recruiting Follows Similar Patterns

While 42% of healthcare professionals indicate they browse healthcare job boards when seeking new opportunities, 73% want to learn directly from employers within preferred geographical areas or recruiters representing multiple employers. Relatively few job seekers contact potential employers directly or rely on peer referrals.

In short, job seekers value time, since job searches typically must take place outside the heavy demands already placed on healthcare professionals. Targeted outreach and recruiting approaches that streamline this process should help conclude talent searches sooner, especially for higher-priced specialties and in-demand practitioners.

Q19 How do you prefer to learn about new permanent-placement career opportunities?



About the 2020 HealthLink Dimensions HCP Communication Survey

This year’s survey polled 181 physicians, nurse practitioners, and physician assistants. Practice areas include Family, Pediatrics and Adolescence, Internal Medicine, Immunology, Sports Medicine, Obstetrics & Gynecology, Rheumatology, Cardiology, Pulmonary Critical Care, Endocrinology, Nephrology, Oncology, Optometry, Geriatrics, Psychiatry, Hematopathology, Critical Care, Neurology, Radiology, Hepatology, Infectious Diseases, Allergy, Anesthesia, Addiction, and Surgery.

About HealthLink Dimensions

Healthlink Dimensions is the pioneer and leading vendor of integrated provider data, enterprise-level data management, and messaging outreach for healthcare marketers, recruiters, and coordinators. Our services empower customers to engage healthcare providers and professionals directly and successfully, building the ongoing connections that lead to community. Comprehensive, accurate data and flexible omnichannel services ensure optimized outreach, enabling organizations to focus on building relationships rather than data hygiene and maintenance. Our scalable offerings transparently support in-house capabilities, delivering outstanding value. Above all, our deep understanding of healthcare marketing enables us to help each client solve unique challenges to build successful relationships with key healthcare providers and professionals. [Learn more about HealthLink Dimensions’ HCP Data, Data Hygiene, Email and Programmatic Solutions at HealthLinkDimensions.com.](https://www.healthlinkdimensions.com)