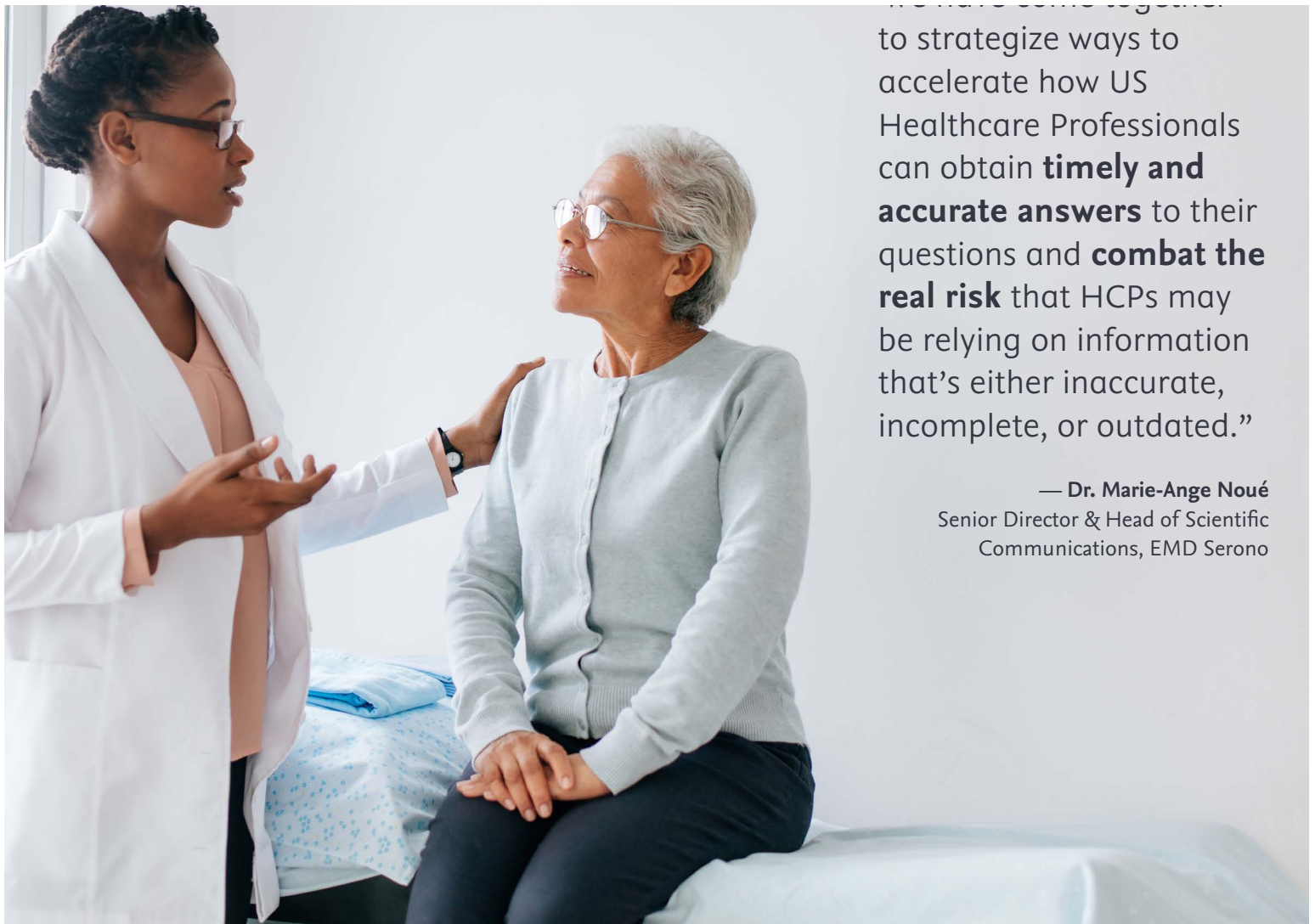


# Making medical information easily accessible to healthcare professionals

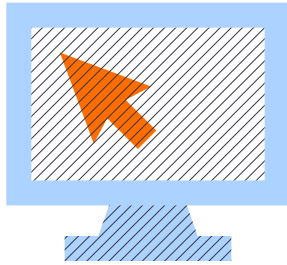
An Interview with Dr. Marie-Ange Noué, Senior Director & Head of Scientific Communications, EMD Serono





...we have come together to strategize ways to accelerate how US Healthcare Professionals can obtain **timely and accurate answers** to their questions and **combat the real risk** that HCPs may be relying on information that's either inaccurate, incomplete, or outdated.”

— Dr. Marie-Ange Noué  
Senior Director & Head of Scientific Communications, EMD Serono



### Summary

[phactMI.org](http://phactMI.org) is a one-stop, easy-to-use online platform designed to better serve healthcare professionals (HCPs) with scientifically-accurate complete, and current information about pharmaceutical products. phactMI, a 501(c)(6), is a collaborative consortium of over 30 pharmaceutical companies. Member medical information professionals worked with Elsevier to deliver their medical information content to the search platform in a way that makes answers easier to find with simple-language queries. Dr. Marie-Ange Noué, Head of US Scientific Communications, North America Medical Affairs at EMD Serono, shares her experiences and thoughts on being part of this first milestone in bringing accurate medical information directly to HCPs.



Ensuring that a product is used safely and correctly is the obligation of any company. For pharmaceutical companies, helping HCPs to prescribe and utilize a product for appropriate patients where, when, and for whom, presents the greatest chance of efficacy and lowest risk of adverse effects is top priority. The most comprehensive and current data on pharmaceutical products to support those decisions in patient care are produced and maintained by pharmaceutical manufacturers, and the reliable delivery of that information is the mandate of medical information divisions.

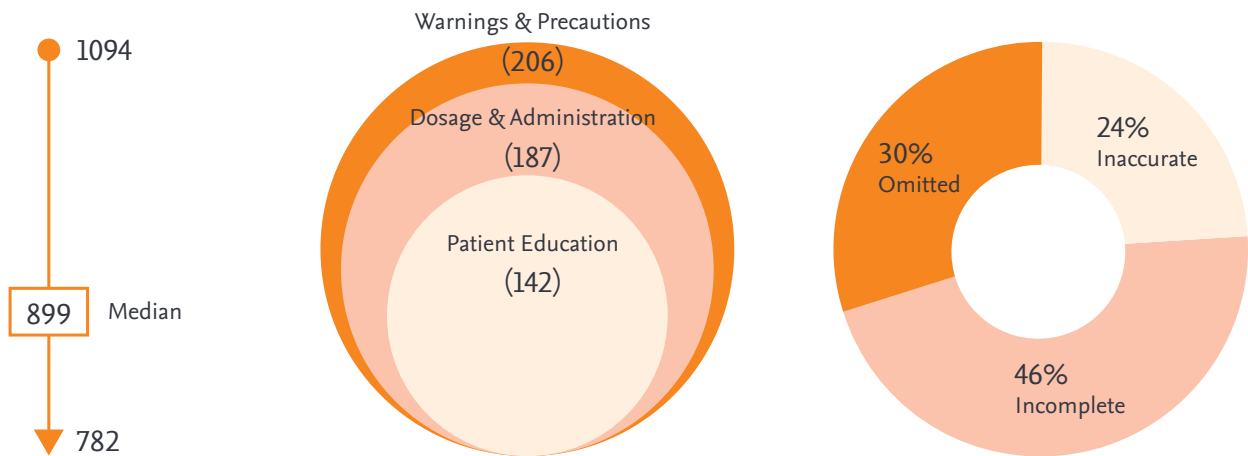
Medical information is usually housed on a company’s website, sometimes behind a cumbersome login or an unclear navigation path. Consequently, getting answers may involve time-consuming visits to multiple websites and frustrating inquiries. Pressured for time, HCPs may turn to one of the numerous online drug compendia, which do not always include the most up-to-date or complete data. Dr. Noué highlights that *“research suggests that some of these resources, although informative and easily accessible, may contain significant amounts of misinformation, which really poses a risk for product misuse and patient harm.”* There is a clear need to facilitate a seamless journey for HCPs as they seek answers to important questions.

An additional barrier to dissemination that Dr. Noué points to is an apparent misunderstanding among HCPs that medical information from pharmaceutical companies serves to promote the company’s product. *“We only provide the facts, whether they favor our products or not,” she adds.*

Together, these three factors — cumbersome access, misinformation, and a misunderstanding of purpose — have obscured the essential role of medical information divisions in supporting the safe and effective use of medications for appropriate patients. *“One of the main challenges we face,”* describes Dr. Noué, *“and it’s not just an EMD Serono issue, it is across industry — is really making sure that HCPs actually know to come to us for the important information that we have about our products, and that the information is readily searchable and accessible.”*

## Misinformation in commonly used online drug information compendia

A medical information specialist from each of 11 participating pharmaceutical companies reviewed drug summaries of up to 5 of their company’s products on each of 3 online HCP-focused compendia.



**Total number of errors found across 162 drug summaries.**

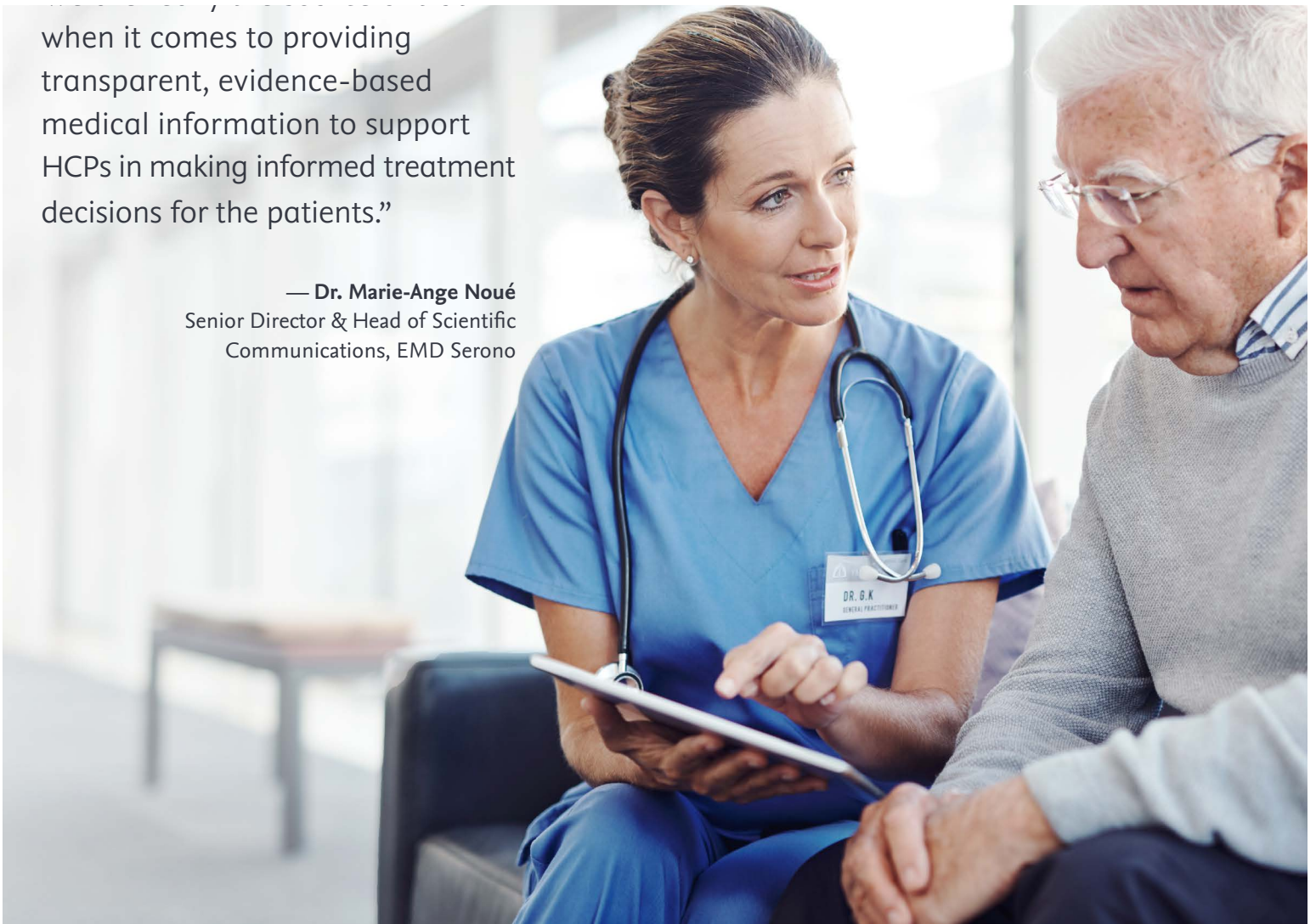
**Information categories with the highest median number of errors.**

**Types of errors found.**

SOURCE: Randhawa, A.S. et al. 2016. A collaborative assessment among 11 pharmaceutical companies of misinformation in commonly used online drug information compendia. *Ann Pharmacother* 50: 352. doi: 10.1177/1060028016635196

when it comes to providing transparent, evidence-based medical information to support HCPs in making informed treatment decisions for the patients.”

— Dr. Marie-Ange Noué  
Senior Director & Head of Scientific  
Communications, EMD Serono



## A consortium: working together to better serve healthcare professionals

To bridge the gap between US HCPs and true sources of medical information, 30 pharmaceutical companies united to form the Pharma Collaboration for Transparent Medical Information™, or phactMI. Dr. Noué is on the consortium Board and explains: *“we have come together to strategize ways to accelerate how US HCPs can obtain timely and accurate answers to their questions and combat the real risk that HCPs may be relying on information that’s either inaccurate, incomplete, or outdated. This type of collaboration is a catalyst to elevate the practice of medical information.”*

The goal of phactMI is to empower HCPs. *“We are really the source of truth when it comes to providing transparent, evidence-based medical information to support HCPs in making informed treatment decisions for the patients.”*

Their tool is a single, easy-to-use online presence where HCPs can search and find what they need to know about all their products with the same ease and speed as a Google query. In the future, access will not be limited to the website. Instead, information will also be accessed through other applications, like electronic healthcare records. The phactMI website is just a starting point to put medical information at the fingertips of HCPs.

phactMI turned to Elsevier’s Entellect and Professional Services teams to conceptualize and manage the data processing infrastructure underlying their centralized medical information platform. Elsevier’s expertise in data harmonization, scientific information representation and natural language processing were essential to the platform’s ability to recognize the context of a user query and deliver an accurate set of results based on the terms used and synonyms.





This project is first of its kind as an industry collaboration and it is so worth it. What we have accomplished is a major milestone in transforming the delivery and accessibility of medical information to HCPs when and where they need it most.”

— Dr. Marie-Ange Noué

Senior Director & Head of Scientific Communications, EMD Serono

Elsevier experts worked with an interdisciplinary group at EMD Serono to coalesce their data for delivery to the platform that made information searchable and answers findable as one of the first member companies to get their medical information on the platform for HCPs to search. In the words of Dr. Noué:

*“It was a long, complex and massive undertaking. This project is first of its kind as an industry collaboration and it is so worth it. What we have accomplished is a major milestone in transforming the delivery and accessibility of medical information to HCPs when and where they need it most.”*

There were missteps along the way that needed to be corrected and unforeseen hurdles that needed to be overcome. Asked for her advice to other pharmaceutical companies contemplating phactMI as an access point to their product-specific medical information, Dr. Noué says, *“mobilize your internal stakeholders early and do it.”* She assures that lessons learned means a smooth process for the next consortium members and describes working in a reliable collaboration with Elsevier and phactMI.

“The Elsevier team was responsive and answered all our questions in a way that even technologically less experienced stakeholders could understand.

The experience was rewarding and advancing HCP access to scientific information in this coordinated way means that the ROI is huge!”

phactMI also serves as a hub that links HCPs to additional resources on a company’s own website, allowing access to experts and trained scientific service providers. Dr. Noué explains that this connection is integral to EMD Serono’s strategy of *“providing a buffet of delivery options so that every type of HCPs will find their information consumption preferences met. Firstly, broad access is essential to ensure that personalized and high-quality medical information about our products is readily*

*accessible, and also satisfies the service expectations of all those involved in healthcare decision making. Secondly, if we see that a particular question is a very hot topic — is frequently asked — then we ensure to make the response available to HCPs in a variety of channels and formats.”* The impact of that access is palpable beyond the initial user. **“Surveys clearly indicate that easy access to comprehensive product information truly empowers the HCPs to educate themselves, educate their patients and ultimately make decisions that may impact the whole community.”**

## The future is automated and personalized

Beyond developing best practices, however, the outcome of this endeavor is a harmonized, customer-centric information hub that embodies the consortium’s vision of the journey toward what has been discussed in the industry as Medical Affairs 2.0. *“Industry and healthcare community insights point to a next-generation approach that personalizes medical engagement. Medical information will be a key contributor to this strategy. At EMD Serono, **our vision for that future is automated, targeted, well-placed delivery of evidence-based medical information. We didn’t take the first strides towards that vision alone. Instead, as a consortium we came together with like-minded enterprises to focus on one thing: to better equip HCPs to make treatment decisions in the best interest of their patients.”***

phactMI has set the bar high. As other members join, content will expand further and opportunities to query it will diversify across multiple touchpoints in the daily activities of HCPs. Creating that direct and uncompromised access by coupling expertise at Elsevier and EMD Serono was a first step in setting new standards in medical information and a great stride in better serving the healthcare community and patients.

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