

# Academic Detailing: Pharma Fights Back

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## Abstracts

Ever since it was introduced three decades ago, academic detailing—which now increasingly uses pharma’s sales techniques to educate physicians—has posed a difficult issue for the industry. Governed by a different set of rules, academic detailing is changing the way pharma approaches sales.

While the FDA has in recent years clamped down on what pharma can say about their drugs and introduced stringent new transparency rules, the same laws do not apply to academic detailers. And as the use of academic detailing increases in the US, where the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) has poured almost \$30 million into the practice, there are increasing concerns over the underlying motivation for its use, in light of tighter public drug budgets.

## Report Overview

In *Academic Detailing: Pharma Fights Back*, FirstWord Dossier examines the use of academic detailing to educate physicians and asks what impact the practice is having on the pharmaceutical industry. The report questions not only the different rules for the industry and academic detailers, but under what conditions the approach works best and how pharma can fashion its response depending on whether the messages are favourable or not. Based on expert interviews, the report also reveals new marketing approaches such as changing compensation structures for sales staff and the increasing use of MSL teams. Incorporating four cases studies, the dossier offers insight into how pharma can stay abreast of what prescribers are hearing—and how it can be managed.

## Key Report Features

Complete overview of the practice of academic detailing

The AHRQ's approach given its growing body of comparative effectiveness research

Discussion of the industry's two-part strategy for 'fighting back'

Insight into adept new marketing approaches to work with academic detailing

Four revealing case studies

## **Key Benefits**

Expert insight from 15 industry voices into academic detailing

Fulsome discussion on how the industry is overcoming the challenges academic detailing presents

Specific examples showing how new marketing approaches can work

## **Key Questions Asked**

How is academic detailing changing pharma's sales effort?

What are the central challenges it presents to the industry?

In light of the different regulatory guidelines governing academic detailers and the industry, what is being done to level the playing field?

## **Who would benefit from this report?**

Senior sales directors

Medical affairs directors

Medical science liaisons

Key account and territory managers

Marketing, brand and sales managers

Business development executives

Regulatory and government affairs professionals

## **Key quotes**

“Academic detailing is not just a ‘say no to drugs’ programme. It begins with the assumption that prescribing is one of the most useful and challenging things we doctors do, and we crave accessible, unbiased data about the drugs we prescribe.” – Dr Jerry Avorn of Harvard Medical School

“Academic detailers are looking to provide evidence-based information to the people they’re seeing. The reality is that we’re all striving for the same goal, which is to ensure that the patient at the end of the day receives appropriate care.” – Mark Ferdinand, vice-president, Canada's Research-Based Pharmaceutical Companies

“I think the trick is to know (a) that academic detailing is happening, and (b) how to have that implying any affiliations. Just to be aware makes you a better partner for your customer, better able to understand their perspective and meet their needs.” – Dr Angela Bakker Lee, managing principal, ZS Associates

## **Expert Views**

Alan Bennett, counsel, Medical Information Working Group

Dr Carolyn M Clancy, director, US Agency for Healthcare Research & Quality

Dr Anthony V Dallas, jr, chief medical officer, CareHere

Dr Robert Dubois, chief science officer, National Pharmaceutical Council

Mark Ferdinand, vice-president, Canada's Research-Based Pharmaceutical Companies

Dr Michael Fischer, president, National Academic Detailing Resource Centre

Sarita Harris, principal, Atiras Group

Dr Angela Bakker Lee, managing principal, ZS Associates

James Millar, vice-president, GlaxoSmithKline

Dr Barry Patel, president, Total Therapeutic Management

Dr Eleanor Perfetto, senior director, reimbursement and regulatory affairs, Pfizer

Dr Robert Popovian, senior director, advocacy and professional relations, Pfizer

Marjorie Powell, assistant general counsel, Pharmaceutical Manufacturers & Research of America

Dr Scott R Smith, senior fellow, US Agency for Healthcare Research & Quality

Cameron Tew, executive director, research, Best Practices

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**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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