Speaker 1: The first step in patient journey analysis is identify. Stakeholders all have different points of interest and engagement in the patient journey, and therefore it's critical to determine the end goal, even before the project gets started. Let's join Lou as he walks us through the phases to help identify those goals.

Lou: The first step to conducting a patient journey should be asking the question, "What does patient journey mean to our organization?" That question isn't always easy to answer, but it's critical to ensure that everyone in the organization understands and is behind the concept in order for any analysis that is to be conducted to be relevant and ensure action is taken once results are available.

Lou: Once you have an organizational understanding of what it is, the next questions to be addressed are, "Why is it important to analyze?" And, "What will we do with the results of the analysis?" And, "How can it be expected to benefit the business?" The importance of patient journey is much like beauty. It's relevance is in the eye of the beholder. In this case, the healthcare stakeholder. While the fundamental analytic construct and basic premise is consistent across patients, providers, payers and life science companies, the importance on which each puts on the five phases of the patient journey can be significantly different. And in some cases, potentially opposite from the others.

Lou: Take a provider, for example. They may be struggling with an overwhelmed ER, with longer than desired wait times and low patient satisfaction scores. Their view of the patient journey is on understanding how people decide to go to the ER, based on their symptomatology, and the analysis may identify that access is a key driver. This may result in the provider organization developing plans to deploy urgent care sites in certain geographies to increase the availability of care, coupled with an advertising campaign to raise awareness. The goal here was to reduce the volume of non-emergent cases, and overall wait times in the ER, and increase patient satisfaction. Their focus was on the decision to engage a portion of the patient's journey to healthcare.

Lou: On the life science front, a company may be developing a new genetic test that is expected to aid in the delivery of more targeted therapy and raise overall treatment success. The goal for this particular organization in understanding the patient journey would be to assess the current diagnostic process for the disease of interest. The costs, patient satisfaction with the process, and assess if their test could provide value in the diagnostic pathway.

Lou: In this case, the life science company is more interested in the healthcare interaction portion of the patient's journey, more specifically the path to diagnosis. The analysis may result in a determination that the test could reduce the spend on treatment for 55% of the diagnosed population through reduction of the use of standard therapies that are less effective for that group, and the organization decides to push forward with development knowing that demonstrating the cost and patient benefit will need to be key outcomes, and demonstrating that value will be essential to gaining acceptance from patients, providers and payers.

Lou: In deciding to undertaker an analysis of patient journey, one must ensure that the end goal is determined before the project even starts, and that the project is tailored to support that eventual implementation.