Speaker 1: Step number six, in patient journey analysis, is embed. What's important to a patient versus a care organization, are often times two very different things. And those differences can get in the way of the patient, and the objectives of the business. In this podcast, [Lynn's 00:00:17] going to talk about the importance of the patient's perspective, and how that can be incorporated into your strategy and goals.

Lynn: Is the patient the central focal point of your organization's objectives? Do you measure specific objectives against patient or customer satisfaction, health outcomes, or other patient quality measures? We know a great deal about patient first in a number of healthcare circles, but do we truly understand what that means with our own organizational culture?

Lynn: If not, one should reflect on how the patient's perspective is currently incorporated into the organizational strategic goals. And if it's not currently a key focal point, what steps are needed to get there. It's our opinion that an organization should always be thinking in the context of the ultimate customer. And you should reorganize your approach to enable your interactions with other healthcare stakeholders to focus on the same end customer. Albeit, with a slightly different perspective and utility function to optimize.

Lynn: One of the biggest challenges that we have in life sciences is that we tend to become myopic to a certain objective that we are trying to achieve versus starting with a customer, or patient in this case, and examining the situation through their eyes. Let's take an example to illustrate the point. Let's assume for a moment that we're a patient with Crohn's disease. What is important to us? Obviously things like symptom relief, some level of control over our lives, ability to enjoy social functions, like just going out to dinner, on the top of the list. As a patient, we aren't necessarily interested in what drug or, even to an extent, what cost comes with that relief.

Lynn: If we're the life science company, what is our focus? Well, we want to have a beneficial impact on patient lives, we do have shareholders to satisfy, and investments to recoup. So while patient benefit may be a guiding principle, the business objectives, the financial objectives typically outweigh the focus on the customer. Frankly, it's human nature. We tend to focus on our immediate pain points, and at times, overlook the contributing factors to that pain, or underestimate the contribution of those factors.

Lynn: On the payer front, the challenge is similar. The goal is to maximize the health of the population under our care, but at the lowest cost possible. At times, the cost aspect of the equation what drives our decision making. And in a very short-term viewpoint, say the next 12 months, or to the next quality survey is issued. I hate to use an overused cliché, but it applies here; good health isn't a sprint, it's a marathon. And it takes all stakeholders, but especially the patient to obtain the maximum benefit.

Lynn: While we may be genetically predisposed to certain diseases, our lifestyle choices potentially accelerate or decelerate the time to which those symptoms manifest, or once diagnosed, progress. It starts and ends with the patient. It's ultimately their choice to engage or not engage, to make good healthcare decisions or not. The rest of the stakeholders set the environment and the rules in which those decisions are made.

Lynn: Slowly work with your organization to embrace patient journey analytics, to assess action in the marketplace, and identify opportunities. Don't try to fit the patient journey to your innovations or business problems, but allow it to inform your decision making processes. Make strides in getting your organization to view the journey through the lens of the ultimate customer, the patient. And assess the impact that all stakeholder's decisions have on that individual customer.