

Building confidence at scale:
The Medi-Span vision for the intelligence layer beneath every medication decision

Wolters Kluwer

Medi-Span®

Executive summary

New research reveals how fragmentation, AI adoption, and changing consumer expectations are increasing the need for trusted therapeutic and medication intelligence.

Payer drug management teams, pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs), retail pharmacies, and digital health technology companies need more than just drug data, medication content, or alerts to keep pace with today's complex medication workflows. Wolters Kluwer surveys of both healthcare professionals and consumers reveal a defining tension: *Healthcare organizations are rapidly advancing AI-enabled medication workflows; consumers remain open to AI-enabled medication experiences, but their confidence is more measured when automation involves less direct professional involvement*.

Medi-Span® – trusted across healthcare for more than 50 years – has evolved beyond traditional drug data to meet the needs of increasingly connected and automated medication workflows. It provides the trusted therapeutic and medication intelligence layer that helps healthcare organizations apply medication information more consistently across connected workflows, strengthen oversight, and scale with confidence. The opportunity now is to extend that trusted intelligence across the increasingly connected systems, experiences, and technologies shaping the future of medication-related work.



What supports your medication decision-making?

How many medication-related decisions do you make in a year? A month? A day?

While it's impossible to know exactly how often professionals across the global healthcare ecosystem make decisions about medications – from routine processing of prescriptions to potentially critical approval and treatment determinations – studies have hinted at the sheer volume:

- Since the pandemic, global medicine use increased by 434 billion defined daily doses and is expected to increase by another 154 billion by 2029.[1]
- There were an estimated 4.98 billion retail prescriptions filled in the US in 2025.[2]
- Nearly 53 million prior authorization requests were submitted to Medicare Advantage insurers on behalf of Medicare Advantage enrollees in 2024.[3]

In today's healthcare environment, medication use, prescription fulfillment, and coverage determinations occur at enormous scale through increasingly complex and digital processes.

Consumers access medications and therapeutic guidance from a wide variety of healthcare touchpoints, not all of which will be aligned. Their expectations are placing increased pressure on healthcare organizations to keep medication information consistent, transparent, reviewable, and defensible across the workflows that shape access, cost, care, reimbursement, product experience, and drug benefit strategy.

What supports this complex network of medication decisions? Trusted drug data is only the beginning. Healthcare organizations need a therapeutic and medication intelligence layer beneath every medication decision that can be applied consistently across systems and workflows. The "therapeutic" dimension reflects an expanding range of treatment types that healthcare organizations must evaluate and manage, including areas such as cell and gene therapies as well as pharmacogenomics. With the appropriate intelligence layer in place, greater complexity can become an opportunity for more connected, transparent, and confident medication-related experiences.

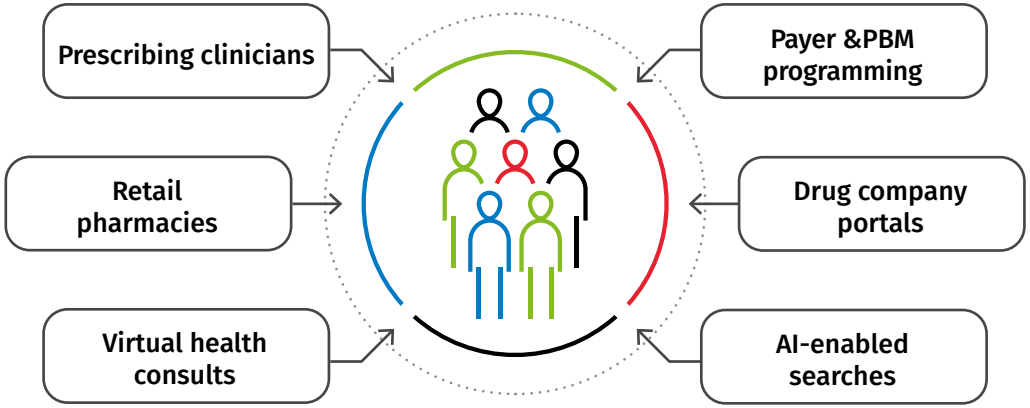


Medication access: Increasingly digital and complex

Healthcare consumers now encounter more interaction points for medication access than ever before: retail pharmacies, virtual care platforms, health plan programs, specialty channels, digital health tools, and AI-enabled experiences. This diffusion creates more handoffs, pressure points, and complexity for the organizations responsible for keeping medication information consistent, transparent, and defensible.

Consumers' levels of participation and trust in these disparate channels and experiences can vary, but the importance of winning their confidence is undeniable. Studies show that consumer trust in medications is positively associated with medication adherence.[4] A 2025 review found that one of the factors shaping trust in digital healthcare is consumers' perceived accuracy of the data they obtain from digital health sources.[5]

The fragmented medication universe



Multiple sources increase the need for consistency and coordination across the consumer experience.



Who do consumers trust to manage medications?

In a recent Wolters Kluwer survey of healthcare consumers[6], respondents demonstrated that they remain most comfortable with their more familiar medication access points. Traditional retail pharmacies remain the resource with which consumers are most comfortable: 86% say they are somewhat or very comfortable with this channel. Despite growing prevalence of digital health resources, fewer than half of consumers say they have used a digital health tool to manage their medications.

Among those who are using digital tools, 70% say they are very or extremely confident that medication information remains consistent across the various channels with which they engage. However, digital-tool users also report more refill, pharmacy, prior authorization, and coordination friction than nonusers.

Key implications from the research studies

- Consumer expectations are materially shaping organizational strategy. Seventy-five percent of healthcare professionals surveyed say consumer expectations are having a major or significant impact on their organizations' medication market strategies,[7] increasing the need to support evolving access preferences while maintaining consistency across channels and workflows.

- Healthcare organizations must support traditional, digital, and hybrid experiences simultaneously to cover various consumer needs and wants. This may be especially important for consumers over age 65 (representing only 16% of digital tool users) and those managing more complex medication regimens (also representing 16% of digital tool users).[6]

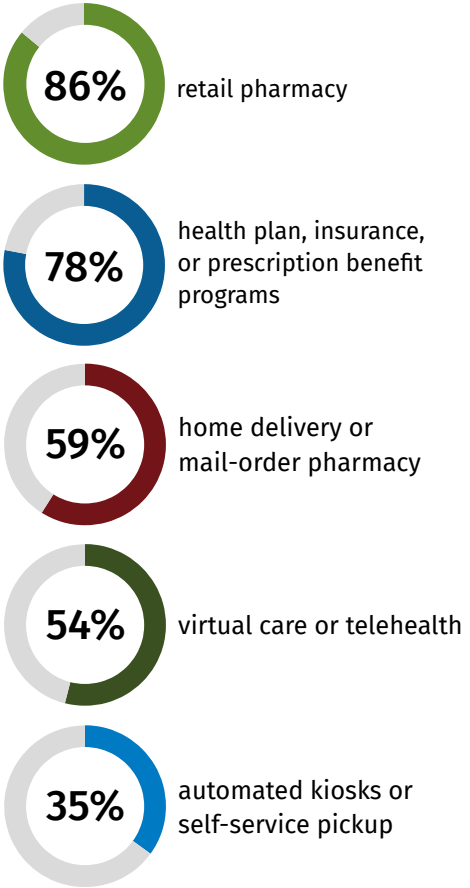
- Many factors could account for the seeming incongruity between high confidence and increased identification of friction among digital-tool users. It could be because they manage their medication access more actively or are engaging with more touchpoints, opening more opportunities for suboptimal experiences. It could also be the result of their activity giving them greater visibility into process breakdowns.

- Consumer engagement, education, and outreach programs have been shown to have measurable impact on treatment adherence and outcomes. In various case studies of Wolters Kluwer customers who have implemented such programs, healthcare organizations have experienced 47%-60% higher rates of medication adherence[8], 27%-65% lower 30-day readmission rates[9], and 75% lower procedure cancellation rates.[10]

- This broader medication access environment requires more from healthcare organizations than simply adding supplementary consumer-facing channels. Since more access channels create more systems, workflows, and organizational handoffs beneath the medication experience, it becomes incumbent upon healthcare organizations to anticipate that potential for misalignment and friction.

Consumer comfort in medication access channels

Healthcare consumers surveyed say they are very or somewhat comfortable with these medication delivery channels:[6]

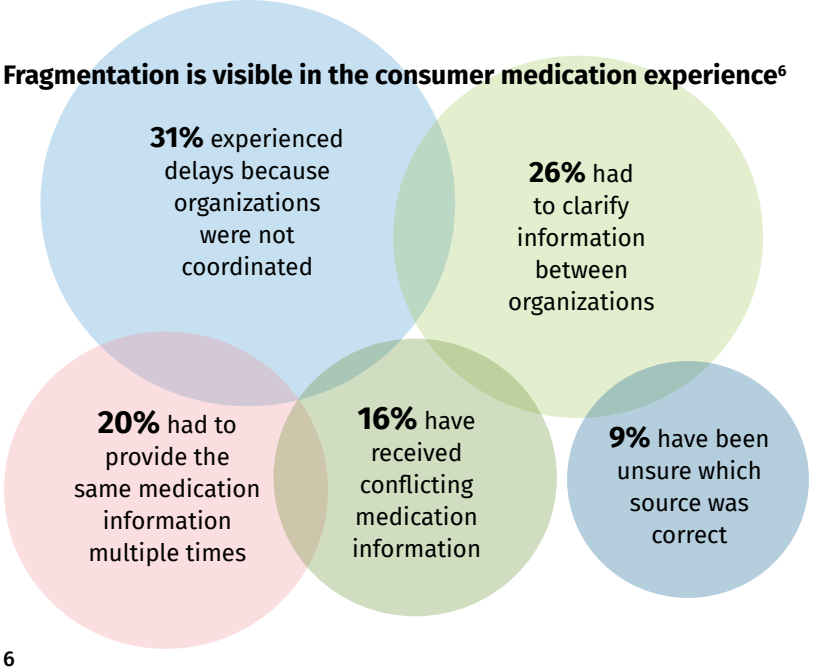


The growing risk posed by fragmented medication information

Fragmented medication information is no longer just an operational problem. It is a growing risk to decision consistency and defensibility, with effects that can reach consumers through care coordination delays, repeated requests for medication information, conflicting guidance, and uncertainty about which source of medication information is correct.[6]

These gaps and instances of friction occur when medication information and logic are inconsistent, incomplete, or difficult to apply. Beyond creating inconveniences for both healthcare professionals and consumers, this inconsistency can weaken the defensibility of decisions, reduce operational efficiency, and make it harder for organizations to scale medication-related workflows and support reviewable decision-making processes with confidence.

Fragmentation is visible in the consumer medication experience[6]



Understanding the difference between surface confidence and fragmentation

Fragmentation in medication-related processes may not immediately appear to some organizations as a pressing problem. Consumer confidence remains relatively strong despite visible fragmentation: 55% say they are very or extremely confident that medication information remains consistent across their access channels and nearly two-thirds describe interaction between their healthcare provider and pharmacy as well or seamlessly coordinated. This, even though 57% also report experiencing at least one issue with medication information and coordination.[6]

A similar contrast emerged from Wolters Kluwer's survey of healthcare professionals:[7]

- 81% expressed high confidence in the embedded drug data used within their organizations' workflows.
- Nonetheless, 40% acknowledged significant financial or clinical risk from fragmented medication data.
- 34% said they struggle with inconsistent medication information across partner organizations.

Generally positive perceptions can coexist with friction beneath the healthcare experience. Consumers tend to believe familiar parts of the system work. But without a consistent foundation of trusted medication and therapeutic information to support connectivity and coordination both within an organization's various functions and between an organization and its ecosystem partners, fragmentation can continue to create gaps that may surface at organizational handoffs – disrupting the workflows of healthcare professionals, the experiences of consumers, or both.

The advantages of a trusted intelligence layer in fighting fragmentation



Digital health technology companies

Integrating a structured and maintained therapeutic and medication intelligence layer can reduce reliance on disconnected sources, helping save product and engineering teams from having to source, validate, and maintain data themselves. With this foundation in place, teams may have more bandwidth to focus on differentiated functionality, workflow design, and customer experience.



Payer drug management teams

Consistent inputs and reviewable supporting logic aid teams in establishing and overseeing drug-benefit strategy and policy, helping them connect drug data, pricing intelligence, utilization criteria, and benefit logic across processes that can often become siloed – such as drug evaluation, formulary development, prior authorization, and PBM oversight.



PBMs

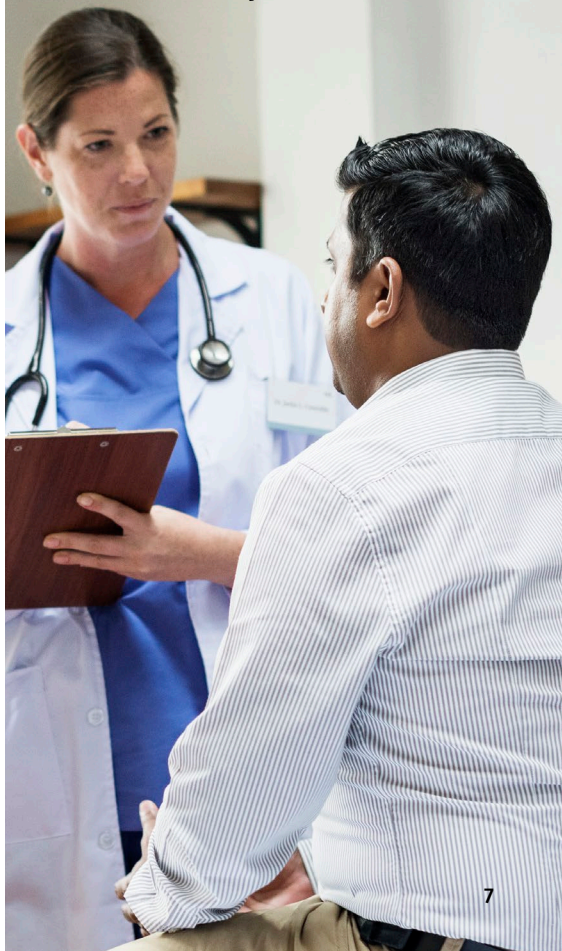
An intelligence layer that connects aligned and defensible clinical, medication, and pricing data with claims and client information can support the application of benefit logic more consistently across products, systems, and operational processes.



Retail pharmacies

More consistent medication intelligence can support pharmacy teams across dispensing, screening, medication review, and customer interactions. This can help reduce instances of repeated clarification, prescription delays, and manual research without sacrificing pharmacist judgment and organizational oversight.

Generally positive perceptions can coexist with friction beneath the healthcare experience.



The AI explosion: Raising the standard for confidence in medication-related decisions

Only 27% of consumers strongly trust automated systems to flag potential drug interactions without direct professional involvement.[6]



In healthcare, there is no longer a question of ***if*** AI. It is now a discussion of ***where, how,*** and ***how much***.

According to a 2025 study from the University of Minnesota, 65% of US hospitals use AI-assisted predictive models.[11] Of the healthcare professionals surveyed by Wolters Kluwer, nearly all report strong advancement or rapid acceleration toward AI-enabled medication workflows, and 88% report their organizations investing in AI-enabled workflow capabilities.[7]

When AI-enabled workflows and solutions can apply their underlying medication information consistently and transparently, they create an opportunity to move faster, extend intelligence across workflows, and support more confident medication-related decision-making.

Consumer attitudes remain more measured. Over 40% of consumers see potential value from the addition of AI-driven automation to their medication interactions, while around 30% expect little change from the addition of AI.[6] But when AI is applied to medication-related processes without direct professional involvement, consumer confidence starts to become more qualified:[6]

- Only 27% strongly trust automated systems to flag potential drug interactions without direct professional involvement.
- 68% said they would double-check pill counts or dosages always or most of the time from an AI-enabled medication process.
- 59% prefer interacting with a professional when discussing medication side effects, while 33% prefer a combination of professional and digital or AI support.
- Only 8% prefer a digital or AI tool alone for discussions about medication side effects.

Healthcare organizations and professionals are also focused on factors such as trust, validation, and reviewability when it comes to AI-enabled medication workflows:[7]

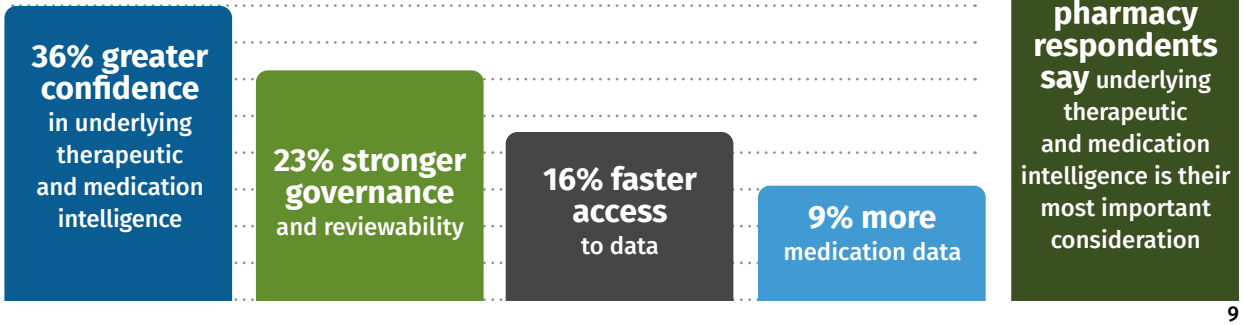
- **Nearly 100% agree** that trust and validation are prerequisites for scaling AI.
- **Nearly 100% say** medication-related decisions must be explainable, reviewable, and defensible.
- **91% rate** human reviewability as very or extremely important.
- **Around 90% place** high importance on source transparency, traceable logic, governance controls, consistent medication classification, and reproducible or explainable medication logic.
- **88% report** having formal governance and oversight processes for AI-enabled medication workflows.

Consumers continue to expect professional involvement and verification, while healthcare professionals are emphasizing the vital role of human reviewability, traceability, and governance. This shows that realizing AI's potential depends on the underlying therapeutic and medication intelligence layer to support its use with consistency and transparency, while preserving qualified professional judgment and organizational accountability.

AI can scale inconsistency just as easily as it can scale efficiency, if the intelligence beneath it is incomplete, unstructured, or difficult to review. When the underlying intelligence layer provides expert-curated content structured for AI-enabled or digital workflows, it can help make medication-related processes more repeatable, traceable, and reviewable while supporting organizational governance policies.

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What do healthcare professionals need to feel confident in AI adoption?[7]



Connectivity is key to addressing long-unresolved medication challenges

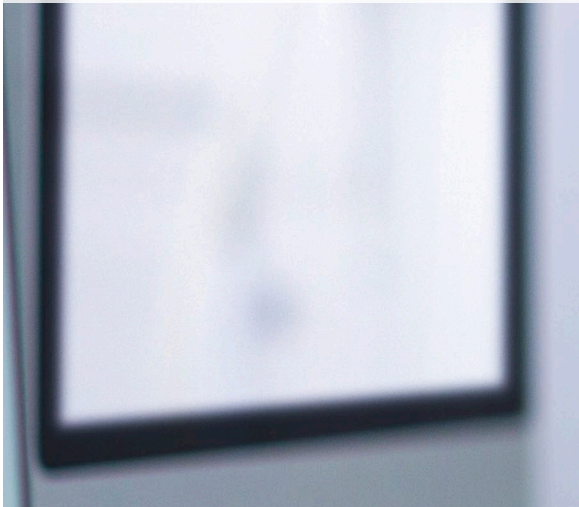
Even amid an ecosystem-wide digital transformation, longstanding challenges involving affordability, medication availability, prior authorization, refill management, and coordination continue to affect the stakeholders and workflows that shape medication decision-making.

- In an American Medical Association survey, 95% of physicians reported care delays related to the complexity of prior authorization.[12] Meanwhile, the Wolters Kluwer survey revealed that 51% of consumers have experienced prior authorization delays or frustration.[6]
- 53% of healthcare professionals identify inadequate interoperability with external partners as a barrier to AI implementation. Thirty-two percent rate it as a significant or major barrier, rising to 59% among digital health technology respondents.[7]

When teams within organizations and players across the healthcare ecosystem interpret and apply medication information differently, unresolved and complex challenges become harder to solve. Connectivity becomes key for medication workflows. That is likely why supporting more consistent medication information across workflows emerged as the most frequently anticipated role for therapeutic and medication intelligence among professionals surveyed.[7]

But connectivity between digital workflows and stakeholders is only a partial step. As information and logic move across organizations and workflows, they must remain consistent and accountable in order to meaningfully impact the existing communication gaps and coordination issues with which healthcare professionals routinely struggle.

When teams within organizations and players across the healthcare ecosystem interpret and apply medication information differently, unresolved and complex challenges become harder to solve.





Do consumers feel the effects of healthcare organizations' connectivity challenges?[6]

Consumers may not always see infrastructure-level challenges directly. Nearly two-thirds describe coordination between their healthcare provider and pharmacy as well or seamlessly coordinated. However, they do report persistent barriers to their medication experiences.

66% affordability and access impact their ability to remain consistent with treatments

41% affected by refill timing

38% affected by pharmacy delays

22% want better coordination between healthcare organizations

18% want greater transparency into cost, coverage, or availability

The Medi-Span vision: Helping healthcare organizations scale with confidence

As healthcare organizations move faster, automate more workflows, and face increasing scrutiny around medication-related decisions, they have an opportunity to create more connected, efficient, and transparent medication-related experiences. Realizing that opportunity will depend on the consistency, efficiency, and trustworthiness of therapeutic and medication intelligence. Among healthcare professionals, 98% expect their organizations' dependency on curated, regularly maintained medication intelligence to increase as workflows become more automated.[7]

The Medi-Span connected intelligence layer

For more than 50 years, Medi-Span medication intelligence has supported healthcare workflows, including the clinical screening and embedded drug data used within EHRs and other healthcare applications to assist clinicians and pharmacists with medication-related decisions. That experience supporting medication intelligence where decisions happen provides important context for the Medi-Span vision today: extending therapeutic and medication intelligence across an evolving treatment landscape and an increasingly connected ecosystem of clinical, business, and technology workflows. It is designed to help healthcare organizations meet professional and consumer expectations by supporting confidence in medication-related decision-making and enhancing consistency across workflows and experiences.



How Medi-Span supports evolving medication workflows

Established, expert-curated medication intelligence

Medi-Span content is developed and maintained through a multidisciplinary process involving nearly 100 professionals with advanced clinical qualifications. The editorial process draws on literature, study data, product labeling, and more.

Structured medication and pricing intelligence

After decades of development, the well-recognized **Medi-Span Generic Product Identifier (GPI)** provides an established structure for organizing, grouping, comparing, and standardizing medication products.

Medi-Span also offers **Price Rx®**, an online reference that provides analysis tools and pricing information for more than a dozen pricing types.

AI-ready medication intelligence

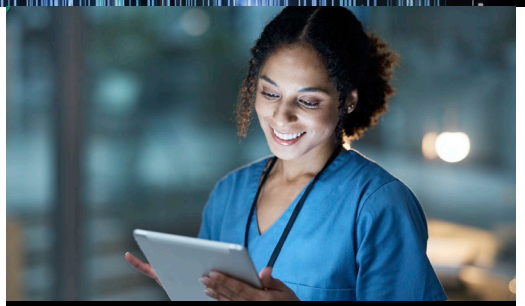
Medi-Span® Expert AI grounds AI-assisted medication workflows in one maintained medication intelligence foundation: MCP-enabled connectivity for applications and agents customers manage, and defined medication workflow agents provided and supported by Wolters Kluwer.

Trusted clinical intelligence ecosystem

Medi-Span is part of the **broader ecosystem of Wolters Kluwer Health**, including UpToDate®, UpToDate® Lexidrug™ and Facts & Comparisons®, and Health Language®. This proximity helps support consistency across clinical and medication decision-making today while creating future opportunities for more connected intelligence, interoperability, and AI-enabled workflows.



The Medi-Span connected intelligence layer helps organizations strengthen medication-related workflows, support greater consistency across systems and use cases, and maintain the transparency and oversight that healthcare professionals, organizations, and consumers need.



Wolters Kluwer Health: *Consistency and trust across healthcare decision-making*

Medi-Span is part of Wolters Kluwer Health, which supports healthcare organizations with trusted intelligence for:

- Clinical decision support
- Medication-related workflows
- Interoperability
- Surveillance
- Patient and member engagement
- Other critical healthcare functions

While each solution serves a distinct purpose, they share a common goal of helping organizations apply complex healthcare information with greater confidence, consistency, and accountability.

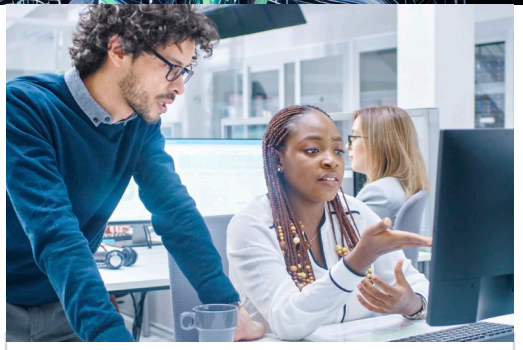
Building trusted medication workflows for the future

As AI adoption increases, 36% of healthcare professionals prioritize greater confidence in the underlying therapeutic and medication intelligence, while 23% prioritize stronger governance and reviewability. Only 9% prioritize more medication data.[7] These priorities point to a larger shift: Healthcare organizations need confidence that the medication information supporting their workflows is expert-curated, structured, regularly maintained, transparent, and reviewable.

Medi-Span is built to support that need. As the trusted therapeutic and medication intelligence layer beneath every medication decision, Medi-Span helps healthcare organizations apply medication information more consistently across workflows, preserve source integrity and context, maintain professional judgment and organizational accountability, and support digital and AI-enabled innovation with greater transparency and oversight. Combined with Wolters Kluwer's broader clinical intelligence ecosystem, Medi-Span is uniquely positioned to help healthcare organizations connect medication, clinical, operational, and AI-enabled workflows through a trusted and consistent intelligence foundation.

The opportunity ahead is to make medication intelligence more useful, connected, and accountable wherever medication-related work happens. This is the Medi-Span vision: ***a trusted intelligence layer beneath every medication decision, supporting confidence at scale***.

Speak with a specialist to learn more about Medi-Span therapeutic and medication intelligence.



Healthcare organizations should evaluate their medication information to assess if they can:

- **Apply medication information consistently across internal and external workflows.**
- **Preserve source integrity, context, and intended meaning as medication information moves through systems.**
- **Trace, review, and explain how medication logic is applied.**
- **Maintain professional judgment and organizational accountability as workflows automate.**
- **Scale digital and AI-enabled innovation without also scaling inconsistent or fragmented information and workflows.**



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