
Medical Device Industry: Two sides of the coin

Several factors are leading to changes in medical device industry. Some of them are related to the varied geographies, some to the consumer preferences.

The world population is aging, with almost 50 % of the population estimated to cross 65 years by year 2039. With a large aging population and increasing incidence of lifestyle diseases, chronic disease as well as geriatric disease, developed nations will see an increasing focus on prevention.

Innovations that are user friendly, which do away with frequent hospital visits or long hospital stays will be much in demand. Increasing awareness and access to information is the key to patients being informed about the latest technology. Remote healthcare, home care or wireless enablement for communication with the healthcare provider are some of the innovations that will see more acceptance by consumers in the developed world. Use of remote monitoring by healthcare professionals leads to patient care at home which comes with multiple benefits, it means convenience and savings on healthcare costs for patients and efficient and effective care for the clinicians. This entire ecosystem allows patients to take responsibility of their own health. Consideration of human factors in device development augments acceptance and more and more people are likely to opt for home based care and self-medication. Examples of such swift adoption are in home use devices such as glucose monitors, nebulizers, which have witnessed increasing sales.

The emerging markets have a different set of challenges and market drivers. The demand for medical equipment in developing countries has outpaced demand in developed countries. The European and the USA markets are growing at 7-8 % a year as compared to Indian and Chinese markets growing at almost 25 % a year.

On one hand they have large population over a billion, which is a large marketing opportunity for medical device companies. The patients are not insured and pay for their healthcare. Their per capita income is much lower than those in the developed countries. The patient population is not that technology or internet savvy as compared to their counterparts in the developed nations. Considering these factors, the price points need to be considerably lower than those in the western part of the world. The marketing strategies need to be different in these emerging economies because the consumer (patient) may not be as educated or knowledgeable as in the west. The medical device companies may have to modify the device portfolio or introduce device modifications to suit the local culture and customs. Marketing strategy, sales and distribution patterns to meet the unique need of this region need to be addressed.

To be successful in each unique region, the companies need to draw from their experience to meet with these challenges to make the most of these opportunities. With our vast experience in medical device clinical trials, we at CBCC are committed to help our clients navigate through different markets.