



# Primary Research in HEOR

Pivotal insights shaping the future of healthcare

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## Introduction

*In the constantly evolving landscape of healthcare, the ability to assess the genuine value, economic viability, and impact on patient outcomes of medical interventions is essential. Health Economics and Outcomes Research (HEOR), utilizing primary research as a rich source of data and perspectives, plays a pivotal role in guiding this critical decision-making process.*

*In this white paper we explore the significance of primary research in HEOR and its profound influence on shaping the healthcare landscape.*

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## 01 Demystifying HEOR

HEOR is an interdisciplinary field that combines elements of economics, epidemiology, and patient-reported outcomes (PROs). It aims to provide a comprehensive view of the impacts of medical practices, encompassing clinical, financial, and qualitative consequences. By integrating elements such as cost-effectiveness, quality of life, and patient satisfaction, HEOR equips stakeholders with the insights to make decisions that enrich patient care.

### **The backbone of HEOR: A glimpse into Primary Research**

Primary research is the bedrock of HEOR. It facilitates the collection of fresh, firsthand data from patients, healthcare professionals, and other stakeholders using the following methods:

#### **Surveys and questionnaires**

These tools offer a profound understanding of patients. Well-structured surveys offer HEOR professionals valuable insights into the patient's perspective, their preferred treatment options, and their health-related quality of life. Such revelations can be transformative, offering real-time insights into the impact of medical interventions and providing a deeper understanding of a patient's healthcare journey.

#### **Interviews and focus groups**

These avenues delve into the intricacies of patient experiences. By facilitating direct dialogues with patients and stakeholders, they bring out the nuances of the patient perspective, highlighting gaps in care and paving the way for healthcare improvement.

#### **Clinical trials**

These are the testing grounds for novel treatments. In the HEOR universe, clinical trials offer invaluable insights, directing redistribution of healthcare resources and the adoption of pioneering treatments.

## 02 PROs and PROMs: The pulse of Primary Research

PROs and PROMs (Patient-Reported Outcome Measures) are essential to primary research. PROs reflect a patient's self-assessment of their health, symptoms, and quality of life, while PROMs provide a standard metric for interpreting the PROs.

### **Patient-centered research**

Primary research ensures that patients aren't just subjects but also active participants. By harnessing PROs and PROMs, HEORs can gauge patient responses, and deliver bespoke medical care tailored to individual needs.

### **Bridging clinical gaps**

Primary research combines clinical trials with standard medical practice. Real-world data collected from Patient-Reported Outcomes (PROs) and Patient-Reported Outcome Measures (PROMs), provides valuable insights into treatment outcomes, adherence rates, and patient satisfaction. This, in turn, supports evidence-based clinical decision-making.

### **Primary research spans the healthcare product lifecycle**

Primary research is not limited to a particular phase but spans the entire spectrum of a healthcare product's journey:

#### **Preclinical and feasibility phases**

Here, primary research identifies the potential pros, cons, and economic implications of nascent treatments - setting the trajectory for subsequent phases.

#### **Clinical development and regulatory approval**

Patient feedback and PRO data is amalgamated to validate treatment efficacy - essential prerequisites for market entry.

## Post-market analysis

Post-launch, primary research remains pivotal, shedding light on treatment outcomes, safety concerns, and patient sentiments in a real-world scenario. This real-time data empowers stakeholders to finetune strategies - ensuring optimal patient results.

## The crucial role of Primary Research in HEOR

Primary research is the focal point of HEOR efforts. With its toolkit of surveys, interviews, clinical trials, and the fusion of PROs and PROMs, primary research represents a wealth of data that shapes the future of healthcare. Leveraging primary research, the healthcare ecosystem can ensure resources are judiciously allocated, treatments are effective, and patient care remains the priority.

## 03 Challenges in implementing primary research in HEOR and mitigation strategies

While primary research plays a pivotal role in advancing HEOR, it is not without its challenges. Navigating these hurdles effectively is essential to ensure the success of HEOR initiatives. Some common challenges faced when implementing primary research in HEOR and strategies to mitigate them are:

Challenge	Challenge Details	Mitigation Strategies
<b>Data Collection Complexity</b>	Gathering comprehensive data from diverse sources, such as patients, healthcare professionals, and stakeholders, can be complex and time-consuming.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employ advanced data collection methods, including online surveys, electronic health records, and data integration tools, to streamline the process.</li> <li>Collaborate with experienced research partners to ensure efficient data collection and management.</li> </ul>
<b>Patient Engagement and Recruitment</b>	Engaging patients and recruiting them for primary research activities can be challenging, especially in long-term studies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish strong patient outreach and engagement strategies.</li> <li>Offer incentives, provide clear communication, and involve patient advocacy groups to ensure high participation rates.</li> <li>Consider virtual options to broaden the reach of research activities.</li> </ul>
<b>Data Quality Assurance</b>	Ensuring the accuracy and reliability of collected data is crucial for credible research outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement rigorous data quality assurance protocols, including data validation checks, data cleaning processes, and regular audits.</li> <li>Invest in training for data collectors to maintain data integrity.</li> </ul>
<b>Privacy and Ethical Concerns</b>	Safeguarding patient privacy and adhering to ethical guidelines while collecting sensitive health data can be a complex legal and ethical challenge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish strict ethical protocols and obtain informed consent from participants.</li> <li>Comply with data protection regulations (e.g. HIPAA) and employ secure data storage and transmission methods to protect patient privacy.</li> </ul>
<b>Resource Constraints</b>	Limited budgets and resources can constrain the scope and scale of primary research initiatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prioritize research objectives and allocate resources strategically.</li> <li>Seek external funding opportunities and collaborate with partners to leverage additional resources.</li> <li>Consider cost-effective data collection methods without compromising data quality.</li> </ul>
<b>Interpreting Complex Data</b>	HEOR often deals with complex, multidimensional data that can be challenging to interpret effectively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employ advanced analytics and visualization tools to simplify complex data sets.</li> <li>Collaborate with data scientists and statisticians to ensure accurate data analysis and interpretation.</li> </ul>
<b>Stakeholder Alignment</b>	Ensuring alignment and buy-in from all stakeholders involved in HEOR initiatives, including healthcare providers, payers, and patients.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foster open communication and collaboration among stakeholders throughout the research process.</li> <li>Clearly communicate the potential benefits of HEOR findings to gain support and commitment.</li> </ul>
<b>Changing Regulatory Landscape</b>	Evolving healthcare regulations and compliance requirements can impact the conduct and reporting of HEOR studies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stay informed about regulatory changes and adapt research protocols accordingly.</li> <li>Work closely with regulatory experts and legal advisors to ensure compliance with evolving regulations.</li> </ul>

## 04 How Phronesis supports HEOR

*Phronesis Partners is a strategic partner in navigating the complex landscape of Health Economics and Outcomes Research (HEOR). Our expertise and robust methodologies empower healthcare stakeholders to make informed decisions, optimize resource allocation, and enhance patient outcomes. Phronesis can provide comprehensive support for your HEOR activities, including:*

### **Customized Primary Research**

Phronesis excels in conducting bespoke primary research initiatives, including surveys, interviews, and clinical trials, to gather first-hand data from patients, healthcare professionals, and other stakeholders. We design comprehensive research programs that align with your specific HEOR objectives.

### **Real-world insights**

Our primary research methods, such as PROs and PROMs, provide deep insights into patient perspectives, treatment outcomes, adherence rates, and quality of life, enabling you to bridge clinical gaps and make evidence-driven decisions.

### **End-to-end HEOR solutions**

Phronesis offers end-to-end HEOR solutions, from preclinical feasibility assessments to post-market analysis. Our interdisciplinary team combines expertise in economics, epidemiology, and patient-reported outcomes to provide a comprehensive understanding of the clinical, financial, and qualitative aspects of healthcare interventions.

### **Real-world scenarios and case studies**

By grounding our understanding of HEOR in real-world scenarios and case studies, the importance of primary research becomes tangible. It's not just about numbers or theoretical outcomes; it's about genuine human experiences, challenges, victories, and the quest for a healthcare system that continually evolves in response to its most critical stakeholder: the patient.



## HEOR applications supported by phronesis (real-world scenarios)

### Diabetes management programs

#### Primary Research tool

Surveys & questionnaires

#### Scenario

A healthcare firm engaged Phronesis to evaluate the impact of a new diabetes management program. We distributed surveys to patients who had participated in the program for six months.

#### Outcome

Phronesis' research revealed that while the program improved blood sugar levels, many patients reported feeling socially isolated due to stringent dietary restrictions. This feedback led to the integration of community-building events and support groups, enhancing participants' holistic well-being.

### Introduction of telemedicine in rural areas

#### Primary Research tool

Interviews & focus groups

#### Scenario

With the rise of telemedicine, a healthcare firm's HEOR team sought to understand its acceptance in rural communities, where access to healthcare is often limited. Phronesis advised the firm to implement a rigorous primary research strategy.

#### Outcome

Interviews with patients and healthcare providers revealed that while telemedicine bridged significant gaps, there were challenges in terms of technology literacy and infrastructure. Consequently, the healthcare firm introduced tech training sessions, ensuring a more comprehensive adoption of telemedicine services.

## 06 Case study: The impact of wearable health devices

### Background

With the proliferation of wearable health devices such as fitness trackers and smartwatches, a healthcare organization collaborated with Phronesis Partners on a comprehensive study to evaluate their impact on patient outcomes, particularly for cardiovascular patients.

### Primary research tools

- Surveys to understand device usage patterns.
- PROMs to gauge improvement in patient's cardiovascular health over time.
- Interviews with patients and healthcare professionals to gather qualitative data on the user experience.

### Findings

#### Positive outcomes

The majority of users reported enhanced motivation to stay active, leading to improved cardiovascular health metrics.

#### Challenges uncovered

Some elderly patients found the technology challenging to navigate, leading to reduced adherence.

### Real-world recommendations

Phronesis recommended that wearable device companies develop more user-friendly interfaces and perhaps even introduce training workshops for specific demographics.

### Conclusion

This case study exemplifies the invaluable role of primary research in HEOR, providing quantitative outcomes and qualitative insights that can drive industry-wide change. The feedback loop created by such research ensures that medical interventions and health innovations truly cater to patient needs, leading to improved health outcomes and patient satisfaction.

## 07 About Phronesis Partners

Phronesis Partners, including our group companies, Simplify Growth and Fuld & Company, is a global research and analytics firm. We deliver high-quality, best-in-class corporate, industry and market research to many of the world's largest research and consulting firms, private equity firms, financial institutions, and publishers.

Our research is both diverse and impactful, helping clients address many of their most complex problems. Be it understanding performance improvement areas for a Bauxite mine in Africa, or building a complex financial model for a Silicon Valley unicorn, or developing a comprehensive Brand index for the world's top brands, our clients rely on us for some of the most complicated research questions across industries.

## Contact Us



**Biraj Ganguly**  
Executive VP – Global  
Market Research  
[biraj.ganguly@phronesis-partners.com](mailto:biraj.ganguly@phronesis-partners.com)



**Binayak Choudhury**  
Managing Partner  
[binayak.choudhury@phronesis-partners.com](mailto:binayak.choudhury@phronesis-partners.com)

[phronesis-partners.com](http://phronesis-partners.com)

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