

# Microdosing

## **Your Front Door Has Moved** (and It Doesn't Have Your Logo on It)

The care journey starts where trust is built. Leading means showing up first – with relevance, not just reach.

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Microdosing delivers short, fact-driven reports that distill today's trending healthcare topics, and add fresh perspectives that are grounded in expert insights and credible data. For more information, as well as an audio version of this report, go to: [www.md-pod.com](http://www.md-pod.com)

In healthcare, the starting point of a patient's journey was once clear: a clinic visit, a primary care physician, or a referral within a trusted network. But that front door has moved, and increasingly, it's not one that traditional providers control. Patients can now enter through retail memberships, branded pharmaceutical platforms, or seamless digital experiences that meet them at moments of curiosity or need.

This shift isn't just about consumerism. It is about brand presence, trust transfer, and context creation, and about who shapes the first step in a patient's care journey. For seasoned healthcare executives, especially those in charge of partnerships, this means reevaluating what success looks like. It's not just about building distribution. It's about earning relevance.

Below are four key dynamics that are reshaping healthcare partnerships. These insights extend far beyond traditional growth models.

### **It's Not Just Reach. It's the Transfer of Brand Equity**

When partnerships succeed, it's easy to point to volume and access as the drivers. But the more subtle, and often more valuable, benefit is brand equity transfer. Who patients trust matters, and increasingly, that trust is being borrowed or transferred through the right kind of partnership.

“Costco being involved in this space drew a lot of attention... and shaped the feeling of safety and legitimacy.”

Michael Botta  
President  
Sesame

Consider Sesame's collaboration with Costco. While the immediate gain was scale, Michael Botta, President and Co-Founder of Sesame, notes that Costco's brand reframed the offering: “Costco being involved in this space drew a lot of attention... They've been great partners to work with.” For patients, the partner brand establishes safety and legitimacy long before a clinician is involved.

For established health systems, this changes the approach. Impactful partnerships today may involve entering another organization's ecosystem, leveraging their consumer reputation to lend credibility to your care.

### **Trust Isn't Built with Credentials. It's Signaled by Context**

Historically, healthcare relied on institutional credibility, certifications, and expertise to build trust. Today, the right partnership can achieve trust more effectively by placing your care offering in the appropriate context.

Evan Richardson, CEO of Form Health, describes how being part of Lilly Direct, Eli Lilly's consumer-facing platform for weight management, reshaped how patients engage with Form: "Our physicians actually don't know where any of their patients

**"Our physicians actually don't know where any of their patients come from."**

Evan Richardson  
CEO  
Form Health

come from... but we have more credibility in interacting with those patients." The platform sets the tone. The partnership sets expectations. For health systems and digital health companies, this is a clear signal: if your brand is buried inside a complex experience or behind insurance verification hurdles, a more agile partner may get the first look and the patient's trust.

### **Alignment Is More Than Just Shared Incentives. It's Shared Language**

Historically, healthcare partnerships relied on aligned incentives. Today, they also require alignment in how the care journey is communicated to patients.

At Form Health, partnerships with fertility clinics, orthopedic groups, and other specialists go beyond transactions. They are built on a shared patient narrative. "We work with folks... to help them achieve broader goals and then integrate them back into the health system," says Richardson. This is more than care coordination; it is a coherent story patients can follow. For executives accustomed to EMR integration or shared reimbursement, the challenge is now broader. The most impactful partnerships align on tone, values, and purpose in patient communication.

### **Presence Isn't Ownership. It's Earning the Right to Be First**

Healthcare incumbents often assume that "owning" the patient relationship guarantees inclusion in the care journey. Yet the most effective partnerships show that presence matters more than ownership. Whoever arrives first, with relevance and value, shapes the care experience.

Partnerships like Sesame with Costco or Form Health with Lilly Direct illustrate this shift. These platforms are now the first point of engagement for many patients considering weight loss care. As Richardson explains, "That is becoming the first step for many people." Healthcare organizations can no longer rely on legacy brand presence to secure patient engagement. Forward-thinking partnerships that place services where patients are already looking – on a retail site, inside a pharmacy ecosystem, or on a consumer platform – are becoming the new gatekeepers.

David Kamenir, Director at Novo Nordisk, puts it simply: “If you have a 32 percent risk reduction for a certain comorbid condition, that resonates with the healthcare provider, but it does not necessarily resonate with the end consumer. Translate those endpoints into what it means for the patient – is it more movement, more freedom?”

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David Kamenir  
Director  
Novo Nordisk,

### **The Front Door Is Already Open. Are You Inside or Watching from the Curb?**

Strategic partnerships used to be about filling operational gaps or reaching new geographies. Today, they are about establishing presence at the moment of decision. When patients take that first step toward care – whether it’s through a retail offer, a pharma website, or a digital marketplace – they shape expectations and form lasting impressions.

The healthcare organizations that win in this model are not just visible. They are credible, accessible, and integrated into the right ecosystems. They partner not to expand reach, but to become part of someone else’s trusted space. So the next time you consider a partnership, don’t just ask what volume it could drive. Ask what brand equity it brings. Ask what context it creates. Ask whether it puts you in the room where the patient care journey begins. The front door has moved. Patients are not waiting for you to find it.

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### **Acknowledgements & Citations**

This report draws insights and direct quotes from interviews featured on the Healthcare Rap podcast, hosted and produced by Jared Johnson and Zain Ismail.

- Michael Botta, Co-Founder, Sesame – Episode 335 July 16, 2024
- Evan Richardson, CEO, Form Health – Episode 324 May 21, 2024
- David Kamenir, Director, Novo Nordisk – Episode 422 May 27, 2025