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Podcast: Sanofi India Chief, Ex-GSK Exec On Pharma's Digitization Journey, Tech Confluence

by [Anju Ghangurde](#)

Sanofi India managing director N Rajaram and ex-GSK executive Salil Kallianpur discuss with Scrip a range of aspects around pharma's digitization efforts including getting the "outside" talent mix right, avoiding digital "intrusion" in physician engagement and the impact of the surge in teleconsultation.

The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated pharma's digital transformation by up to six years by some estimates. Leading industry executives in India, in a conversation with *Scrip*, outlined the dynamics around taking digitization beyond the traditional sales organization.

Getting the digital building blocks right is pivotal and may also mean that organizations need to adjust their structures and processes to be able to include people of "very different origins" in terms of talent, said [Sanofi India Ltd.](#) managing director N Rajaram.

Organizations are moving away from a "command and control, one-leader organization chart" to

more agile structures amid digitization. New talent, including from the technology world, will flourish when senior leadership in pharma are able to provide the right cultural environment, though a “minimum critical mass” of outside talent is also very important, he underscored.

The sharp uptick in teleconsultation and shifts in pharma’s commercial model as firms both big and small pursue digital launches and efforts around personalization/customizing engagement with healthcare professionals (HCPs) were some of the other aspects discussed in our podcast.

Salil Kallianpur, a former executive vice-president at [GlaxoSmithKline plc](#) in India, noted how pharma- driven teleconsultation platforms are generally viewed with a degree of “trepidation” by some physicians, though paradoxically HCPs also expect industry to help manage patient engagement.

Kallianpur, who now runs a digital health consultancy, also emphasized that well-designed digital outreach can be extremely impactful, with HCPs being very receptive to such engagement.

Podcast Time Stamps

00:08 Introduction

02:28 Marketing as a function is being redefined

04:59 Pharma is using digital for improved patient care

07:43 Firms need to adjust structure/processes to include people of different origin in terms of talent

08:36 Sanofi University

11:13 How tech and pharma can see eye-to-eye

13:20 Digitization and cost avoidance

15:34 Teleconsultation is here to stay

17:17 Investments in telehealth globally are soaring

18:22 Consumers and do-it-yourself healthcare model

21:11 Pharma driven platforms viewed with trepidation by HCPs?

25:13 Innovation is beyond just the pill

28:10 Moore's law

29: 28 Toujeo digital launch in India

31:00 Avoiding digital intrusion

34:20 The next big thing in pharma's digitization journey

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