



Best Programs & Best People

Best in Class Medical/Clinical Science & Outcomes Liaison Customer Insights 2026

Each year, HIRC’s Best-in-Class MSL/HEOR benchmark captures a unique perspective from the market—direct nominations from payer and PBM decision-makers on the MSL/HEOR personnel who stand out most in the field. Widely referenced by market access teams, HIRC’s report, *Best-in-Class Medical/Clinical Science & Outcomes Liaison Customer Insights*, has become a trusted indicator of field excellence and a valuable tool for both recognition and development. The report addresses the following questions:

- Which very large, large and mid-size firms' MSL/HEOR personnel receive the most best-in-class nominations?
- Which firms lead in best MSL/HEOR nominations across health plan pharmacy directors, health plan medical directors, and pharmacy benefit manager executives?
- Which MSL/HEOR attributes operationally define the best-in-class?
- Which firms receive the most nominations for providing the best "medical value story"? What do the best value stories most often include or communicate?

Key Finding: The best MSL/HEOR personnel are described as well-informed and knowledgeable, responsive and communicative, and serve as valuable information providers.

MSL/HEORs from AbbVie Lead in Best-in-Class Nominations

HIRC queried 69 commercial health plan and pharmacy benefit manager key decision-makers to learn which firms' medical/clinical science & outcomes liaisons are best-in-class. AbbVie leads with the most best-in-class nominations from managed markets customers, followed by Novartis, Novo Nordisk, and Pfizer.

LEADERS IN BEST-IN-CLASS
MSL/HEOR NOMINATIONS, 2026

OVERALL RANK	TOP MANUFACTURERS	# of NOMINATIONS
1	AbbVie	13
2	Novartis	11
3	Novo Nordisk	10
4	Pfizer	9

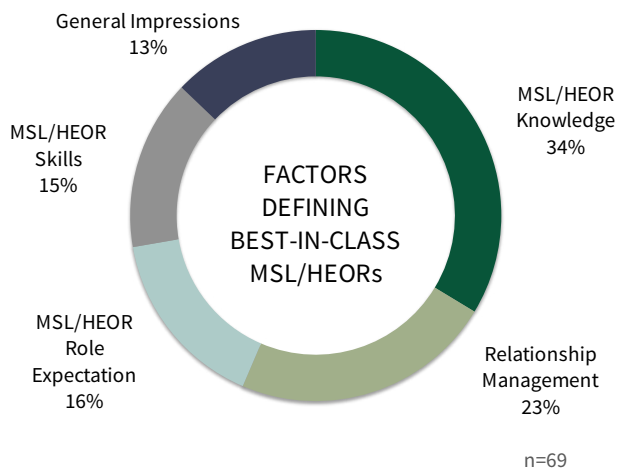
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Beyond demonstrating deep product knowledge, top MSL/HEORs differentiate themselves through how they build trusted partnerships and deliver evidence-based insights.

- **AbbVie** MSL/HEORs are noted for deep knowledge of managed care and portfolio expertise.
- **Novartis** MSL/HEORs are commended for clinical and scientific expertise and a strong understanding of payer needs.

Defining Best-in-Class MSL/HEOR Personnel

Managed markets customers were asked to explain their rationale for best-in-class MSL/HEOR nominations. Analyses reveal that their evaluations fall within five key descriptive factor categories: (1) MSL/HEOR Knowledge, (2) Relationship Management, (3) MSL/HEOR Role Expectation, (4) MSL/HEOR Skills, and (5) General Impressions.



This year's findings provide a valuable perspective on the capabilities that distinguish best-in-class MSL/HEOR professionals in an increasingly complex healthcare and market access landscape. Beyond identifying industry leaders, the results illuminate the behaviors and competencies most valued by managed markets decision-makers. Scientific expertise, stakeholder engagement, and the ability to deliver relevant clinical and economic insights account for the majority of best-in-class nominations and represent critical areas for ongoing talent development and organizational investment.

Research Methodology and Report Availability

In May 2026, HIRC surveyed 69 key decision-makers from commercial health plans and pharmacy benefit managers. Online surveys and follow-up telephone interviews were used to gather information. The complete report, *Best in Class Medical/Clinical Science & Outcomes Liaison Customer Insights*, is available now to HIRC's Best Programs and Best People subscribers at www.hirc.com.

The Best Programs & Best People Service provides strategic and tactical information to assist pharmaceutical manufacturers in maximizing the impact of their account managers, medical science liaisons, and value-added marketing programs. This service provides insights into the skills and attributes critical to account manager and medical science liaison success, as well as guidance for the development and implementation of support resources that meet customers' evolving needs. For subscription information please contact:



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