

THE PERFORMERS

✕ CANADA'S INFLUENTIAL THOUGHT LEADERS ✕

MICHAEL ROSZAK

Chief operating officer, Express Scripts Canada



Over the past 25 years, Michael Roszak, chief operating officer, Express Scripts Canada (ESC), has led major business development initiatives in senior roles within the health benefits management and digital health industries. He joined ESC in 2019 to oversee operations, client services, marketing and sales, and is quick to credit the rest of the executive leadership team with giving him tremendous confidence that the health benefits manager will hit its objectives across the organization. That enables him to focus all his energies on strategy execution.

What are your responsibilities as chief operating officer at ESC?

At ESC, we develop our corporate strategy after closely consulting with our clients – insurers, third-party administrators and government. It's my responsibility to execute that strategy. I tend to get involved in the bigger, client-focused projects, including complex contract negotiations and new client implementations. I make sure we always track in the right direction, remain aligned with client expectations and continue to drive our objectives based on where our clients need to be in the future as well as where they need to be right now. I also keep our client services, group sales and

account management teams focused on putting our clients first.

What attracted you to ESC?

The first draw for me was the people. It's a small enough industry that I had worked with many of them before and I believe that if you've got good, knowledgeable people who are hardworking, you can get most anything done. The other piece I found interesting was that ESC is solely focused on health benefits management and is supported by a strong U.S. parent company. That makes us unique in the Canadian market.

How are you setting ESC apart?

First, we know our success is based on our clients being successful, so we pay close attention to how our clients want to go to market. From pharmacy benefits to specialty pharmacy, we use a flexible technology platform that allows us to accommodate requests from our clients. We complement that technology platform with a deep knowledge base within our company. We strive to be thought leaders and to bring our expertise to the table so we completely understand what our clients want and can pivot when we need to.

How does ESC draw on the strengths of its parent company?

We have unique access to the expertise of the world's largest pharmacy benefits manager. Express Scripts in the U.S. provides health services for about one-third of all Americans. If you add in Cigna, which acquired Express Scripts in 2018, you get up to about one-half. That scale drives research, innovation and capabilities that they share with us at ESC. One direct benefit is that when we consider implementing a program that already exists in the U.S., we can get detailed information on what worked and what didn't. There are, of course, fundamental differences

between the medical systems in our two countries. So then, because our senior management team is entirely Canadian, we can translate the U.S. experience into the Canadian context.

What innovative solutions are you working on?

The biggest focus of innovation for us right now is within our pharmacy, which nicely complements our claims processing service. If we can help patients make the most of their drug therapies, that's good for everyone. Because pharmacists are accessible and trusted health workers, they are in a good position to provide suggestions and guidance. And because we own and operate pharmacies, we have an opportunity to apply innovative strategies that enhance the positive influence a pharmacist can have in a plan member's life. That can make a significant difference in areas such as medication adherence.

Looking to the future, what excites you most?

The uncertainty brought about by the pandemic is also providing positive opportunities. We've seen increased demand for accessibility and digital self-service from our clients and from our clients' clients. As digital health and wellness tools continue to expand, we can have a broader reach and improve plan member health outcomes, adherence and safety. What excites me is that our clients are seeing the same issues and also looking at ways to effect change. We take a strong partnership approach with our clients, so we're working with them on innovation in these areas. We've got the people, the technology and a great base of clients. Together, we can have such a positive effect on the lives of Canadians.

