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GSK's Haleon Sets Its Sights On Improving Health Inclusivity

by Tom Gallen

As GSK prepares to launch its standalone consumer health business, Haleon, Tess Player, global head of expert and influencer marketing, talks to HBW Insight about the new company's plans to improve health inclusivity globally and empower 50 million consumers per year to self-care by 2025.

GlaxoSmithKline has high hopes for its standalone consumer health business, Haleon, when it launches in July. Haleon is targeting organic annual sales growth of 4-6% over the medium term, which CEO-designate Brian McNamara said will be achieved, in part, by reaching new consumers with its products.

GSK Consumer Healthcare's Tess Player told HBW Insight that Haleon will pioneer new ways to bring self-care to under-served sections of society.

"Our overall aim is to empower millions of people a year to be more included in opportunities for better everyday health," said Player, who serves as global head of healthcare professional & health influencer marketing.

Key to encouraging more consumers to adopt self-care habits is breaking down the barriers standing in their way. Player pointed to a recent GSK study which found that while eight out of 10 people agreed managing their health was their own responsibility, only two out of 10 felt very confident in doing so.

Health Inclusivity Index

To better understand the disparity between the number of consumers willing to self-care and those who feel able, Haleon will launch in July its Health Inclusivity Index.

Describing the Index as the "health inclusivity equivalent of the gender pay gap or the Edelman Trust Barometer," Player said the project will help Haleon – and wider society – to identify key

drivers of health inequality and the barriers preventing people from adopting self-care, such as societal factors and individual behaviours.

With desk research underway, Haleon says the results will provide insights to inform its own actions and to help identify opportunities for partnerships and wider coalitions of action in the medium to longer term to measurably improve health inclusivity.

“We’ve made a commitment to reach 50 million people a year by 2025 and empower them to be more included in opportunities for everyday health,” Player explained. “We’re really conscious that this is an area that’s been looked at for decades, but we want to state our position that this is something we’re invested in for the long term.”

Along with helping Haleon meet its company purpose to “deliver better everyday health with humanity,” the Index will support McNamara’s goal of increasing household penetration of the company’s products.

At Haleon’s first capital markets day in February, Terry Lyng, head of transformation and sustainability, noted that, “when people are more engaged in self-care, they spend more on healthcare products and services.” Lyng highlighted a US IRI study from January 2022 which found that “those most proactive consumers spend 12.5% more than the average on GSK Consumer Healthcare products.”

GSK Consumer Split Set For July, With Emerging Markets And Switch To Drive Growth

By [Tom Gallen](#)

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GSK will spin-off its consumer health business in July under the name Haleon. The standalone operation expects to outpace market growth rates by expanding in emerging markets, tapping into consumer demand for more natural products and delivering two Rx-to-OTC switches in the US.

[Read the full article here](#)

Academic Partners

To bring the Index to fruition, Haleon has partnered with The Economist Intelligence Unit and academics at University College London. “A panel of experts from around the world on different aspects of this are convening in March to look at some of the outcomes of the desk research and see what the key determinants of health inclusivity are,” Player explained. The July launch of the Index will be supported by an interactive online hub, enabling anyone to engage with the findings and analysis.

While the research stage of the project is still ongoing, Player said one determinate of inclusivity that is sure to surface is health literacy.

“That’s one of the areas we want to go after first,” she stated. “We have a responsibility to make sure the language on our packs is really understandable. And we’re also looking at what we can do for visually impaired.”

“When we get the results of the Index we’ll know more about how to tackle some of the gaps.”

With the launch of the Index, Haleon will build on the work undertaken by GSK Consumer Healthcare to promote self-care and support consumers to do so. As a member of the Global Self-Care Federation GSK supported the development of the Self-Care Readiness Index, which analyzed countries in terms of four key enablers of self-care: stakeholder support and adoption, consumer and patient empowerment, health policy and regulatory environment. (Also see "[GSCF Calls For WHO-Backed Global Self-Care Agreement](#)" - HBW Insight, 6 Oct, 2021.)

Player has also spoken to HBW Insight previously about GSK’s work with the International Pharmaceutical Federation to identify ways the company could better assist pharmacy in the age of self-care. (Also see "[Why GSK Is Backing Community Pharmacy – Q&A With VP Tess Player](#)" - HBW Insight, 6 Dec, 2021.)