

Top 10 Must-Haves

in an Expert Medical Opinion (EMO) Partner

A woman with short blonde hair is looking at a laptop screen. The screen shows a man in a white lab coat, likely a doctor, in a video call. The entire image has a blue tint.

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Are you leading the vetting process for an EMO solution at your organization? It's important to recognize that not all solutions are created equal in the market. Our checklist is here to help you evaluate your options.

Consider whether your future partner provides:

#10 Validated Financial and Clinical Outcomes

- Has there been an actuarial analysis by an independent third party?
- Are any peer-reviewed studies validating outcomes available for review?

Tip: Dig into often-cited, broad statements around "averages" for ROI and outcomes.

#9 Client Tenure that Drives Member Value

- What does your potential partner's client longevity and growth story look like?
- Have they tailored services to populations and/or piloted new programs as client needs have evolved?

Tip: Strong partnerships are good indicators for quality, satisfaction, and savings, but also reinforce the potential to grow population-specific services together over time.

#8 Coping and Support for Members and Caregivers

- What coping and support services are offered to members with serious or complex conditions?
- Does this unlimited support also extend to caregivers?
- Is mental health screening included as part of delivering ongoing support?

Tip: Coping is an area that is commonly overlooked with regard to expert medical opinions. However, helping members and their caregivers cope during stressful times should be a key component of a holistic healthcare journey.

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- #10 Validated Financial and Clinical Outcomes
- #9 Client Tenure that Drives Member Value
- #8 Coping and Support for Members and Caregivers
- #7 Collaboration by a Multidisciplinary Physician Team on Complex Cases
- #6 Medical Decision Support from Diagnosis to Recovery
- #5 A Range of Virtual Consultation Types
- #4 Fast Turnaround Times
- #3 In-Network Provider Referrals for Treatment and Continuity of Care
- #2 Wide Integration Capabilities, Friendly to Your Ecosystem Partners
- #1 The Ability to Serve Diverse and Global Populations



#7 Collaboration by a Multidisciplinary Physician Team on Complex Cases

- Does your potential partner have the technology to complete multidisciplinary cases requiring two or more consulting physicians?
- Will your partner give the member access to the same multidisciplinary team for longitudinal opinions over time (for Oncology and Musculoskeletal issues in particular)?

Tip: For complex cases—where a multidisciplinary team is required— sophisticated technology and strong relationships are needed to quickly render a case. These capabilities ensure members have a well-coordinated and collaborative opinion delivered in a single report with guidance from all consulting physicians included.

#6 Medical Decision Support from Diagnosis to Recovery

- Is medical decision support available pre- and post- EMO consultation?
- What efforts are being made to educate members on their diagnosis or condition?
- Does your partner provide a dedicated, highly skilled clinician as the main point of contact for the entire healthcare journey?

Tip: A high-quality, high-touch EMO begins with a thoughtful understanding of the member's present health concerns and guides them through formulating key questions and considerations for their care. This improves health literacy and their ability to advocate for themselves as treatment progresses.

#5 A Range of Virtual Consultation Types

- What kinds of video consultations are available to members?
- Can members interact with more than one expert physician over live video, when needed?
- What types of asynchronous/store-and-forward options are available for those members with busy schedules or in disparate time zones?

Tip: Technology is meant to support and enhance the human experience. Prioritizing access, choice, and member convenience with a range of virtual consult types from which to choose improves satisfaction and member engagement.

#4 Fast Turnaround Times

- Does your partner focus on speed-and-accuracy vs. speed-only when delivering expert medical opinions?
- How does your partner ensure thorough case preparation and physician network responsiveness?
- Is the collection of medical records turnkey on behalf of the member?
- Is that process aided by automation or performance incentives?

Tip: Achieving industry-leading turnaround times for high-quality EMOs comes from the careful orchestration of many key activities, namely: clinically complete medical record collection, accurate and concise summarization, and maintaining a highly engaged network of institutions and individual expert physicians ready to render cases day or night.

#3 In-network Provider Referrals for Treatment and Continuity of Care

- Can your partner optimize the in-network physician pool by identifying the highest quality providers plus ensuring referrals to centers of excellence?
- Does your partner have a proprietary tool to rank physician quality?

Tip: Bridging next steps for an EMO should always include helping the member select and work with an in-network, highest quality physician. The application of A.I. and machine learning helps to identify these physicians and to steer the delivery of high-quality care and outcomes for populations.

#2 Wide Integration Capabilities, Friendly to Your Ecosystem Partners

- Can your partner make friendly referrals to your other partners, both digitally and by phone?
- What kinds of data exchanges come standard?

Tip: The term integration means different things to each vendor. Make sure to explore the breadth and technical depth of the options offered, especially what comes with standard implementation. To maximize benefit adoption and success, partners should work together to make referrals as warm and seamless as possible for members.

#1 The Ability to Serve Diverse and Global Populations

- What support is there for non-English speaking members? Does this support come in every language?
- Can medical records be collected from abroad and translated?
- Do international members have access to the same consultations as your domestic members?
- Are tools used to proactively assess a member's social determinants of health (SDoH)?

Tip: Recognizing the importance of inclusivity and access for all populations should be core to any EMO solution. Services should also take into account SDoH and address their impact on potential obstacles and healthcare outcomes. The shared mission is to democratize healthcare guidance for all members.