

Katie Healy

Executive Research Director, ThinkGen



Specializing in Qualitative Research

Many people working in healthcare market research find this profession accidentally or join after careers in academia or industry. Katie Healy is one of the exceptions; she purposefully pursued market research as a career. Katie first earned a bachelor's degree in psychology from Michigan State University but wasn't quite sure what she wanted to do after graduation. She considered going into clinical counseling or clinical research, but after working in research labs in school and shortly after graduating, she realized she didn't want to pursue a career in academia.

Discovering Market Research

It was around this time that Katie learned from a former classmate about Michigan State's graduate program for market research. This interested Katie as it sounded like an opportunity to apply her interest in human behavior in a real-world applicable format—something academia would not afford her. She was accepted into the program and began working towards her master's degree in market research. During the program, Katie started her market research career as an intern at a healthcare market research company in June of 2016.

Now at ThinkGen, five years into her healthcare market research career, Katie says that one of her favorite things about the industry is gaining a better understanding of what goes into developing pharmaceutical products. She has realized that unless you're working in pharma in some way you can't fully appreciate or understand the extensive and challenging process of getting effective therapeutics to market.

A Passion for Qualitative Research

As part of understanding that process, Katie has found she especially enjoys qualitative research projects. Most recently, she has found great satisfaction working on projects that relate to the launch of a COVID-19 therapeutic. She's found these projects particularly interesting because of the personal and global relevance. It's also been especially interesting for Katie because of the topic's dynamic and ever-changing nature.

Katie remembers her first qualitative research project most clearly. Katie was working for her former employer and with a colleague who is also now at ThinkGen. What Katie values most about that experience is the mentorship she received from her colleague on doing qualitative work, as well as learning to manage the various dynamics of the backroom.

Another poignant project Katie has worked on was for type 1 diabetes in the spring of 2020. She recalls that she traveled from a family vacation in Florida to join a client meeting in NYC with two colleagues for a day of qualitative research. This happened right when the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown was about to take effect. It was very eye-opening and shocking for Katie when she realized shortly thereafter, she would not be doing face-to-face research for the foreseeable future. Schools were beginning to go virtual, and the world was changing minute by minute. The team had to adjust their plan of action and the client switched to virtual research due to the inability to conduct face-to-face research. Starting the project in a pre-pandemic world and having to evolve on the fly was an experience that really stands out. The way everyone involved—the client teams, agencies, and



the ThinkGen team—held their composure is impressive to her now. Looking back a year later, Katie remarks at how well we've all adjusted and how it speaks to our resilience.

Why ThinkGen?

Katie loves working for a company that is always evolving and maintaining a competitive advantage. She enjoys seeing the continual innovation and enjoys being part of it. The main reason she loves working for ThinkGen is the people; she feels very fortunate to have joined the ThinkGen team of researchers. While she doesn't speak to everyone everyday outside of her direct business unit, she does regularly talk with people on other teams to get direction on certain resources and finds that there's always another team member from another business unit ready to help. Katie also has deep gratitude for the team she's on within ThinkGen, especially for her manager, Ray Chan, who she says has been a wonderful mentor during her time here. Being able to work with her team day-to-day is what she really enjoys, especially because she hadn't experienced such a collaborative team dynamic prior to coming to ThinkGen.

The other thing Katie enjoys about working for ThinkGen is the opportunity to work in a virtual environment. She thrives working independently, so knew she'd do well in a virtual setting. The ability to work in a virtual environment allows Katie to have more flexibility and improves her overall quality of life. She doesn't miss the florescent office lights one bit or feeling like she needs a nap at her desk in the afternoon.

In Her Off Time

Like most of the employees at ThinkGen, Katie has a dog and cat who keep her company while she's working from home and enjoys being able to spend time with them when the work-day has ended. Katie and her significant other moved from Michigan to Portland, Oregon in September 2020 and while she found it challenging to move during the pandemic, she's grateful to be in a part of the country with so much to explore outdoors. Katie loves that the hiking opportunities are endless in her new hometown and enjoys having a view of Mount Hood in the distance to turn a simple drive to the grocery store into an enchanting experience.

