

Rx Matters



A newsletter created for Walgreens Health Initiatives clients, delivering a mix of news and trends in healthcare, and up-to-date information about our products and services



MedMonitor® Shows 34.8-Percent Success Rate

The proprietary Walgreens MedMonitor® retrospective drug utilization review program demonstrated an impressive 34.8-percent clinical impact success rate for the first six months of 2007. The success rate is defined as those interventions sent to healthcare providers and/or pharmacies that resulted in the recommended changes to medication therapy. In addition to improving patient care, these interventions produce saving for payors, employer groups, and their members.

“Our impact calculations are not artificially inflated by including brand-to-generic conversions, step therapies, and prior authorizations like some programs in our industry. Our results are fully transparent.”

– Jim Langman, vice president,
Clinical Services

The value MedMonitor provides is additive to a payor’s formulary management strategies. MedMonitor outcomes are based on incremental total healthcare savings, which include both prescription and medical savings for each client. MedMonitor’s extensive, sophisticated rules identify savings based on clinical changes seen in claims analyses 120 days after the interventions. This positive clinical impact rate is then used to calculate both the prescription and the medical financial impact for each client.*

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Rated No. 1 in overall member satisfaction by:



Certified by:



“Our goal with MedMonitor is to present to healthcare professionals the most clinically relevant information that yields the greatest clinical impact,” explained Jim Langman, vice president, Clinical Services. “Our MedMonitor impact calculations are not artificially inflated by including brand-to-generic conversions, step therapies, and prior authorizations like some other programs in our industry. We have those programs as well, but their savings and value are calculated independently. Our results are fully transparent.”

MedMonitor uses a state-of-the-art patient-matching process to provide a single clinical view of a patient and maintain their claims history, regardless if they change their name, employer group, or cardholder identification number. MedMonitor integrates prescription and medical claims to review an entire population and helps identify patients’ risk for adverse drug events and nonadherence to clinically appropriate standards of therapy. Specialized pharmacists contact the patients’ healthcare professionals to notify them of medication-related problems, such as over- or under-utilization, and/or opportunities to benefit from additional therapy, based on evidence-based practices. This process effectively minimizes patient disruption while arming healthcare professionals with the necessary information to improve patient care.

The MedMonitor program can be used in conjunction with the focused, intensified Walgreens Medication Therapy Management Program. The Walgreens Medication Therapy Management Program assists payors by focusing on the highest utilizers of prescription medication—the 4 percent of members who produce an average of 29 percent of a plan’s costs.

**Results may vary, based on member demographics.*

OTC Zyrtec® Spells Cost Savings for Plans

The popular nonsedating antihistamine (NSA) Zyrtec® (cetirizine HCL) lost its patent protection on December 25, and an over-the-counter (OTC) version of this medication is anticipated to be available in mid-January. As Zyrtec has placed among the top 25 medications in total cost over the past few years, the fact that it no longer requires a prescription is exciting news for prescription medication plan sponsors: Our analysis shows that OTC Zyrtec is anticipated to reduce NSA drug spend by 30 percent.



Pfizer, manufacturer of prescription-strength Zyrtec, will discontinue production of the prescription version of the medication with the launch of OTC Zyrtec. Walgreens Health Initiatives will continue to adjudicate prescription-strength Zyrtec as a covered medication until supplies run out. The pediatric forms of the medication will be available both OTC and by prescription. To minimize member noise, at no charge to you, your members will be informed by letter at the end of January that Zyrtec will be available OTC. The letter will include a \$5-off coupon toward their first purchase of the OTC product to encourage them to try it.

With two effective OTC products in the NSA category (Zyrtec and Claritin®), clients now have four possible management strategies to consider for further cost reduction, beyond the savings realized simply from these products being available OTC. In addition to discontinuing coverage of this category, another option is to continue covering NSAs, since you should realize cost savings because two of the leading medications are OTC. A third option is to initiate a step care therapy program in which members must try each of the two OTC products, then a generic, before a brand-name alternative is covered at the third-tier copay level. The fourth option is to initiate a step care therapy program requiring that members first try both OTC products, then allow generics at the first-tier copay level, and brand-name medications at the third-tier copay level. Your account executive can assist you in determining the best approach for your plan from the available options.

Web Site Enhanced

The member web site, MyWHI.com, is more helpful and easy to use than ever, thanks to the latest enhancements to the convenient pharmacy locator, which allows members to find the 100 closest participating network pharmacies. The pharmacy locator can filter search results by 24-hour locations and Advantage90® participation. This tool also makes it possible to price a medication at a specific pharmacy, and provides maps and driving directions. There is also a new Manage Your Account page, which members see when they log on to MyWHI.com, from which they can update their username, password, e-mail preferences, and mailing address. They can view their current balance, recent transactions, eligibility information, and make a payment. In addition, personal secure messaging instantly and securely alerts registered mail service members of important information regarding their



accounts, such as refill order delays when they've tried to refill too soon. Our web team is constantly exploring new opportunities to make the site as informative and user-friendly as possible. Encourage your members to use MyWHI.com for easy, secure, online access to their pharmacy benefit.

Generic Dispensing Rate Reaches 70 Percent

The advantages of increasing generic utilization are well established, making it a key strategy of ours in managing our clients' trend. For our clients, the overall generic dispensing rate (GDR) climbed to 70.04 percent in the third quarter, compared with 59.50 percent in the third quarter of 2006. The goal for PBMs and their clients should be to continually increase generic dispensing rates. Substantial cost savings can result from generic substitution. Analysis shows that for every 1 percent increase in generic utilization, Walgreens Health Initiatives clients realize approximately a 1.5 percent savings in total drug spend. In general, generics have the same quality, safety, and strength as branded medications, but their average price can be discounted 30 percent to 80 percent below their brand-name counterparts. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that generic medication use saves \$10 billion per year.

MAC List Updates a New *Rx Matters* Feature

Claims for generic medications may be processed at deeper discounts than the contracted discounted average wholesale price (AWP). These generic medications appear on the Walgreens Health Initiatives Maximum Allowable Cost (MAC) List. The MAC list is developed to maximize savings for our clients while providing fair reimbursement to the pharmacy network. The Walgreens Health Initiatives MAC Committee, consisting of pharmacists and other industry experts, meets regularly to determine MAC list updates based on clinical appropriateness, drug availability, relevant price statistics, market changes, and ad-hoc research. Below are the latest significant additions and deletions to our MAC list:

Below are the latest key changes to our MAC list:

Walgreens Health Initiatives Significant MAC List Updates (November-December 2007)			
Additions			
Generic	Strength	Brand Equivalent	Therapeutic Class
amlodipine/benazepril tablets	2.5-10 mg, 5-10 mg, 5-20 mg, 10-20 mg	Lotrel®	hypotensives
benazepril tablets	5 mg, 10 mg, 40 mg	Lotensin®	hypotensives
carvedilol tablets	3.125 mg, 6.25 mg, 12.5 mg, 25 mg	Coreg®	cardiovascular preparations
metoprolol extended-release tablets	50 mg, 100 mg, 200 mg	Toprol-XL®	cardiovascular preparations
Deletions			
None			

Newsletter Articles at Your Fingertips

Looking for an easy way to reinforce your pharmacy benefit message? You can turn to the Walgreens Health Initiatives library of newsletter articles ready to be published in your company newsletter. The articles provide a concise, member-friendly explanation of a variety of topics. These include Advantage90®, generic medications, our health risk assessment program, mail service, step care therapy, and our member web site. Your account executive can provide you with the complete list of articles currently available.

Walgreens News

This fall, Walgreens celebrated the grand opening of its 6,000th store nationwide in New Orleans and its first Hawaii store in Honolulu.

At the Honolulu event, Walgreens Chairman and CEO Jeff Rein presented a \$5,000 donation to the American Diabetes Association as part of the grand opening ceremonies. Rein pledged that Walgreens, as a healthcare provider, will help improve the lives of local residents living with diabetes, especially the 20 percent of Native Hawaiians with the disease, which is more than double the rate of other residents. "Our pharmacists can have a real impact on helping these patients manage their diabetes and live a healthy life," he said.

In southern California, Walgreens extended a helping hand to the evacuees of the wildfires by donating more than \$60,000 in merchandise to the relief efforts. Two truckloads of donated merchandise arrived at San Diego's Qualcomm Stadium, providing water, sunscreen, diapers, baby wipes, and dust masks, along with medical supplies.

Rx Drug Update

The Food and Drug Administration recently approved the following new medications:

Drug Name	Company/ Availability	Indication(s)	Dose Form(s)	Regimen	AWP as of December 2007
Hycamtin [®] (topotecan) capsules	GlaxoSmithKline Early 2008	Treatment of relapsed small cell lung cancer (SCLC)	0.25 mg and 1 mg capsules	Highly individualized based on patient weight	Unavailable
Azor [®] (amlodipine/ olmesartan) tablets	Daiichi-Sankyo Currently available	Treatment of hypertension	5 mg/20 mg, 5 mg/40 mg, 10 mg/20 mg, 10 mg/40 mg tablets	One tablet once daily	\$2.66 per 5 mg/20 mg tablet \$3.38 per 5 mg/40 mg tablet \$3.01 per 10 mg/20 mg tablet \$3.82 per 10 mg/40 mg tablet
Isentress [™] (raltegravir) tablets	Merck Currently available	Treatment of HIV infection	400 mg tablets	One tablet twice daily	\$16.88 per tablet
Tasigna [®] (nilotinib) capsules	Novartis Currently available	Treatment of chronic myeloid leukemia (CML)	200 mg capsules	Two capsules twice daily	\$59.39 per capsule
Renvela [™] (sevelamer carbonate) tablets	Genzyme Early 2008	Control of serum phosphorus in patients with kidney disease	800 mg tablets	One to two tablets three times daily	Unavailable

New Rx Indications

The following medications have been approved by the Food and Drug Administration for new or expanded indications:

Drug Name	Original Indication	New or Expanded Indication
Abilify ® (aripiprazole) tablets	Treatment of schizophrenia and bipolar disorder in adults	Treatment of schizophrenia in adolescents ages 13 to 17
Crestor ® (rosuvastatin) tablets	Treatment of hyperlipidemia	To slow the progression of atherosclerosis in patients with elevated cholesterol
Nexavar ® (sorafenib) tablets	Treatment of renal cell carcinoma	Treatment of unresectable hepatocellular carcinoma
Seroquel XR ® (quetiapine) extended-release tablets	Treatment of depressive episodes associated with bipolar disorder and the acute treatment of schizophrenia in adults	Maintenance treatment of schizophrenia in adults

Mark Your Calendar

Stop by the Walgreens Health Initiatives booth at the following shows to learn more about our innovative solutions to pharmacy benefit management:

17 th Annual National Health Benefits Conference & Expo (HBCE)	State and Local Government Benefits Association (SALGBA) 2008 National Conference and Exhibition
January 17-18, 2008 Tampa Waterfront Convention Center Tampa, Fla. www.hbce.com	March 9-12, 2008 Hyatt Regency Mission Bay Spa & Marina San Diego, Calif. www.salgba.com
Pharmacy Benefit Management Institute (PBMI) 2008 Drug Benefit Conference (Jim Langman, our clinical services vice president is a featured speaker.)	
February 26-29, 2008 The Pointe Hilton Tapatio Cliffs Resort Phoenix, Ariz. www.pbmi.com	

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National Observances

Some upcoming health-related observances are listed below to help you plan health fairs and other activities. For more information, log on to the sponsoring organization's web site. For a complete listing of this year's national observances, visit the National Health Information Center's web site at www.healthfinder.gov/library/nho.

Observance	Date	Sponsor, Web Site
National Birth Defects Prevention Month	January	March of Dimes www.marchofdimes.com
American Heart Month	February	American Heart Association www.americanheart.org
National Wise Health Consumer Month	February	American Institute for Preventive Medicine www.healthylife.com
National Wear Red Day	February	National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute Health Information Center www.nhlbi.nih.gov
American Diabetes Alert Day	March 25	American Diabetes Association www.diabetes.org
National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month	March	Cancer Research and Prevention Foundation www.preventcancer.org
National Nutrition Month	March	American Dietetic Association www.eatright.org

Medication Matters

The following article, written for your members, can help raise awareness of this important health issue.

The Dangers of Sharing Medications

Has a friend ever offered you one of her prescription medications? Studies show that sharing medications is not uncommon. However, it is both illegal and dangerous.

Why do people share medications? Some believe they can diagnose friends or family members when they have experienced similar symptoms, and they believe they are being helpful by sharing medication. In other cases, people share medication to save money. Finally, although it is not always considered sharing, children and adolescents may experiment with medications they find in the family medicine cabinet. Some of them mistakenly believe that it's safer to experiment with prescription medications than street drugs.

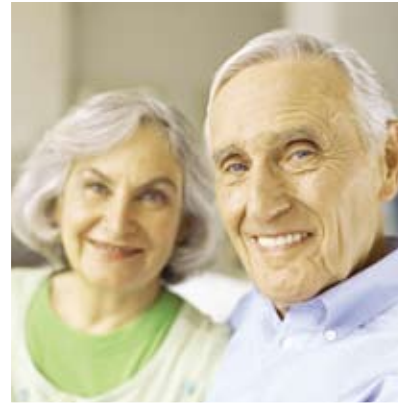
What happens when you share your medications? Keep in mind that your doctor prescribes medication based on knowledge of your current health conditions. Your friend may be experiencing a different problem. Sharing medication could result in her condition remaining untreated and perhaps becoming worse. In addition, the doctor is aware of other medications you are taking and selected the medication for you based on that knowledge. Because your friend is likely to have a different medication profile, sharing your medication with her increases the risk of dangerous side effects. Some medications can interact with the ones you are already taking, causing serious side effects. If your friend has

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a medication allergy, offering her your medication may be risky because of the cross-reactivity of some medications, meaning that people who are allergic to a particular medication may be more likely to be allergic to related ones. An example of this is when someone is allergic to penicillin, he or she may have allergies to cephalosporins or may not realize that something like amoxicillin is a type of penicillin. Doctors and pharmacists screen all medications for dangerous interactions and possible allergies before they are dispensed to avoid these risks.

The dosage prescribed to you is likely to be based on your age, weight, or gender, which may be different from your friend's. Even if your friend happens to have the same condition as you, it's likely that the dose you are taking is not appropriate for her.

Finally, by giving away some of your medication, you reduce the amount of medication available for your use. Your doctor prescribed a certain number of doses to help ensure that your condition would be effectively treated. By reducing the number of doses, you reduce the chances your condition will be properly treated. In the case of antibiotics, if you don't finish all of your medication, your infection may come back and be more difficult to treat.



Each type of medication carries unique risks. People who are taking certain medications may need to be monitored by a healthcare professional to avoid or detect serious side effects. Many medications can affect an unborn child or small infant, and should not be used by women who are pregnant or breastfeeding. And some medications should not be taken by seniors because they may react differently to them than younger people do, creating health and safety risks. All prescription medications have benefits and risks that should be evaluated by the healthcare professional who prescribes them for a particular individual.

The risks of sharing prescription medications are many. Rather than sharing your medication with family members or friends, encourage them to see the doctor instead.

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Rx Drug Update and New Rx Indications

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