

Rethink Rx benefits to control costs, improve health

Discover a customized, synchronized approach to pharmacy care.

Pharmacy benefits management (PBM) is a key tool for employers hoping to control health care costs. But PBM systems tend to focus only on direct pharmacy spending. While that accounts for roughly 20 percent of pharmacy costs, it can dramatically affect the other 80 percent of health care spend.

A webinar from Optum[®] describes a technique that goes beyond the traditional PBM approach to address both pharmacy and medical spend. It's called the synchronized approach or synchronization.

Synchronization is built on the concept of coordinated pharmacy care services and a complete 360-degree view of an employee's health and wellness.

While a traditional PBM might focus on just managing formularies or home delivery programs, OptumRx[®] not only addresses these areas, its synchronized approach connects those types of administrative processes with other points of care.

The strategy is possible due to the Optum intelligent engine, which captures hundreds of data points in real time from sources including clinical visits, insurance claims, lab reports, health assessments and, of course, real-time pharmacy claims.

"We have visibility through not only what we dispense but the more than \$30 billion in specialty pharmacy spend that we manage across the PBM," says Brian Laird, the vice president of specialty products and services at OptumRx/BriovaRx.

The system analyzes the inputs and delivers proactive health and savings opportunities unique to each member in a single dashboard accessible by care teams.

How does it work?

Here's how the synchronized approach works:

- Health care advisors replace the traditional pharmacy customer service model and work with an expert team of nurses and pharmacists for member calls.
- Dashboard alerts allow health care advisors to proactively view and offer health and savings opportunities personalized for the patient.
- Recommended interventions are prioritized based on clinical value and the member's "propensity to accept" the action.

The goal is to match each patient with the right care, right provider, right medication, and right lifestyle management services.

Clinical-first approach

Reaching that goal takes what Laird calls a clinical-first approach. He explains that's what sets synchronization apart from traditional PBM techniques which rely only on therapy-specific methods.

"Even when traditional PBMs try to synchronize around the patient, it's still very administrative," says Laird.

"They may create a specific team that manages multiple sclerosis. That's great. But you still go through all the same administrative steps."

He says when a patient is surprised by a new diagnosis, they don't care about a particular prescription or the need for prior authorization. They care about where they will get support.

Results

The support provided through synchronization helps simplify the member experience.

In one email or phone call, members connect with a health care advisor who helps manage provider network searches and appointments, claims processes, wellness program referrals, health coaching opportunities, pain or symptom management and specialty Rx needs.

For employers, a synchronized approach helps members utilize services available to them and improves member satisfaction, productivity and retention.

A synchronized approach can also reduce emergency room visits and admissions, increase participation in care management programs, promote adoption of lower cost medications, and improve medication adherence.

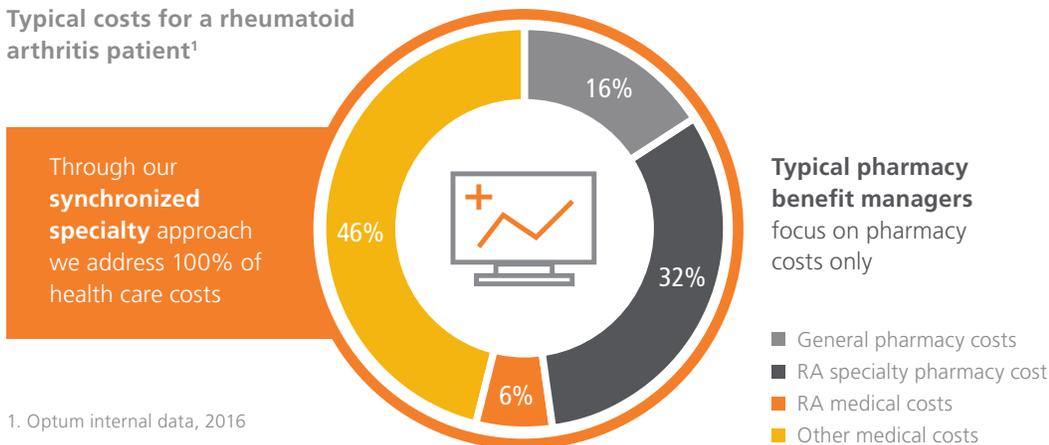
Optum research shows employers can realize \$11 to \$16 dollars in per member per month savings with a fully synchronized approach.

"We're addressing the overall medical spend through the combination of care management programs with pharmacy to make it smarter, easier, and healthier for employers and their employees," says Doreen Bortel, senior vice president of client solutions at Optum.

To learn more about synchronization, view the 30-minute webinar. Laird and Bortel will explain how the synchronized approach is customizable to employer needs, walk through a view of the dashboard, and describe how synchronization can affect one of the most critical areas of cost concern — specialty pharmacy.

Our synchronized specialty approach addresses total health care costs

Typical costs for a rheumatoid arthritis patient¹



1. Optum internal data, 2016



11000 Optum Circle, Eden Prairie, MN 55344

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