TOP TRENDS

From AMCP Nexus 2023

Lockwood Market Access was onsite at AMCP Nexus this past week to keep a pulse on the evolving healthcare landscape. Our full-service market access communications agency understands the importance of infusing clinical, industry, and real-world payer expertise to tackle access challenges across the continuum of stakeholders. Below are some of the top trends discussed this year at AMCP Nexus.

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1 Next steps for Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) Implementation

The IRA, signed into law in August 2022, is already having a profound impact on various healthcare stakeholders needing to evaluate the requirements and anticipating unintended consequences of the mandate. With 2024 provisions fast approaching, impacted stakeholders are focused on implementing the elimination of the 5% coinsurance for Part D catastrophic coverage and expanding eligibility for low-income subsidy (LIS), shifting a higher financial burden onto both plans and manufacturers. Plans are already preparing financially for the 2025 benefit change requiring a $2,000 out-of-pocket capitation for Part D. Each year will bring its own challenges with stakeholders, each with conflicting priorities. Expect to see impact to formularies and utilization management, among other benefit-related offsets, as a response to these provisions.

2 Originator to biosimilar transition hurdles

The introduction of biosimilars have brought benefits and complexity to healthcare. There is a consensus that biosimilars will eventually alleviate some financial burden of more costly originators. Payers, providers, and patients have interest in the available biosimilars and their potential impact on outcomes and the cost to treatment. The adoption of biosimilars has been slow due to multiple stakeholder concerns. Commonly voiced challenges include the lack of interchangeability data, patient and provider hesitancy to switch an effective therapy, and formulary strategies limiting access to biosimilars. The introduction of both high and low wholesale acquisition cost (WAC) pricing has created confusion. While a low-WAC list price may provide some benefit, a contracting approach may still provide financial benefits that outweigh the low-WAC option, leading to a high-WAC product being preferred on formulary.

3 Evolution of value assessment to date and into the future

The growth of rare disease treatment options and the high cost of healthcare spend reinforce the need for a shift away from fee-for-service to a value-based model. Today, no singular definition exists for value assessments for the evaluation of health technology. Many tools exist that can be incorporated into formulary and benefit design processes. The use of existing tools for health technology assessment (HTA) has grown; however, each organization must navigate and select from a variety of tools available on the market. As products become more complex, individualized to patients, curative, and at a premium cost these assessments will also need to evolve to maintain relevance.

A rich pipeline of rare disease medications makes value assessment incorporation within the drug evaluation process a high priority for managed care, as well as rare disease manufacturers.

4 Increased use of data and technology to enhance population management

Leveraging data and technology to maximize efficiency for the healthcare system is another key theme in managed care. Incorporating social determinants of health (SDOH) data within healthcare forecasting and management has gained tremendous traction and is currently incorporated into clinical and formulary assessment committees. Like value assessment, consistency and quality of data will determine the impact of these efforts, and manufacturers are increasingly considering these determinants in their approaches, as well.

The potential and risks of artificial intelligence (AI) are a common topic across all industries. How to use AI to enhance patient outcomes is a frequently asked question among payers and access stakeholders. Fundamental understanding of AI is lacking, which has led to organizational restrictions placed on its use. Partnering with experts will be necessary to learn the capabilities and risks of AI, as current concerns range from output quality, reliability, and data security.

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