



Why specialty costs dominate spend – and what to do about it



There is no one-size-fits-all solution

As the cost of specialty medications continues to climb, we're developing innovative ways to help keep costs down for plan sponsors.

For years, we've been carefully crafting the right clinical expertise, benefit designs and industry relationships within the pharmacy benefit to help manage specialty medications. Now, plan sponsors can take advantage of that knowledge and rigor to help them regulate costs on the medical benefit.



The problem

Managing medically administered medications is increasingly complex. Unlike National Drug Codes (NDC) on the pharmacy benefit, J or HCPC codes used on medical benefit claims lack specificity, which can result in missed opportunities to control costs while ensuring quality care.



The opportunity

Infused therapy is increasing in utilization by **14% year-over-year**. Since some sites of care can be **more than 130% more expensive**, it's important to address opportunities to control cost.¹



The Optum solution

There are many ways to remove the cost variability of medical claims. **The Specialty Medication Optimization strategy** incorporates three programs with different approaches that work together to help you reduce costs and stabilize extreme price variations for professionally infused or injected medications.

Different solutions for different medications

Drive to lower-cost sites of care

Drive to lower-cost sites of care **The Specialty Redirection program** retrospectively redirects care to a lower-cost site of care, such as home infusion, infusion suite or a doctor's office, as appropriate.

Ideal for medications like:
Remicade® (autoimmune conditions)²



\$10,500

Average hospital claim



\$4,500

Average clinic cost per claim



\$6,000

Potential savings



Bring medication to the provider

The **MedicalRx Benefit Optimization program** controls cost variations by getting medication through a designated specialty pharmacy and delivering it to the administration location.

Ideal for medications like:
Velcade® (oncology)³



\$2,900

Average cost per infusion claim



\$1,800

Average pharmacy cost per claim



\$1,100

Potential savings



Meet providers where they are

The **MedicalRx Specialty Provider Network program** helps providers contract at a specific reimbursement rate for the medication and administration. This program leverages provider's lower medication purchasing power and preserves their autonomy.

Ideal for medications like:
Orencia® (autoimmune conditions)²



\$5,000

Average cost per infusion claim



\$4,250

Average pharmacy cost per claim



\$750

Potential savings



Apply pharmacy expertise to solve medical benefit challenges

We have built a strong foundation managing pharmacy medications that helps alleviate plan sponsors' specialty challenges. Now, we are channeling our expertise in other areas of medical care. From retrospective management to fully engaged solutions that meet our clients where they are, we help people reduce the costs of complex specialty medications.



For more information, contact your Optum Rx representative or visit optum.com/optumrx.

1. Magellan Rx Management. Magellan Rx Management 2019 Medical Pharmacy Trend Report. Accessed August 31, 2020.
2. OptumInsight normative health information (NHI) data. Internal analysis of claims based on 11.5 million commercial lives over 12 months. November 1, 2019–October 31, 2020.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.

