

Managed Healthcare[®]

EXECUTIVE

AMCP Annual Meeting highlights specialty pharmaceutical challenges

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New medical breakthroughs that never fail to astound and costs that never fail to shock: Therein lies the most pressing challenge, and most promising opportunity, presented by specialty medications, the fastest growing sector in pharmaceuticals.

Both the challenges and opportunities presented by specialty pharmaceuticals will take center stage at the AMCP Managed Care & Specialty Pharmacy Annual Meeting in San Francisco, April 19 to 22. AMCP even changed the name of its spring event to include “Specialty Pharmacy” to reflect the meeting’s expanded focus on this sector.

The Annual Meeting begins Tuesday, April 19, with AMCP’s inaugural Specialty Pharmacy Connect, which sold out weeks ago (livestream option is available). While this is not AMCP’s first specialty pharmacy pre-meeting program, it is the organization’s most ambitious.

Some of the biggest players in specialty pharmacy, from across healthcare will present, including: Steve Miller, MD, senior vice president & chief medical officer of Express Scripts, Inc.; Josh Lemieux, general manager of consumer health in the Health & Life Science Group of Intel Corp.; and Steven D. Pearson, MD, MSc, president of the Institute for Clinical and Economic Review.

The future of specialty pharmacy

With events in healthcare and new drug discovery happening so quickly, managed care practitioners and decision makers are struggling to plan for the future. They want to see and talk about the full range of options, and that’s what the Specialty Pharmacy Connect program will focus on.

Panelists will examine the movement away from payment models based on volume to those that reward value; another discusses how the new technology-supported medicine can improve patient engagement and disease management; and a final panel looks at new strategies for managing specialty pharmacy, including growing use of economic principles to assess therapeutic interventions.

Specialty medications are here to stay. Since 2010, the FDA has approved more specialty drugs than traditional drugs, and the trend is likely to continue.

But another new trend is starting to make headlines. That is the arrival of biosimilars in the U.S.

The FDA this month approved its second biosimilar; through 2020, an estimated \$54 billion in reference biologic products will lose patent protection. Biosimilars offers the promise of considerable savings to the healthcare system.

At the meeting, attendees can attend sessions on the biosimilar pipeline and the [Biologics and Biosimilars Collective Intelligence Consortium](#), which AMCP established in 2015 to analyze post-marketed evidence generation for novel biologics, their corresponding biosimilars and other related products.

While the presidential campaigns have produced numerous proposals on how to thread the innovation-cost needle, nothing replaces managed care pharmacy's evidence-based, increasingly value-focused approach to improving patient access, affordability and outcomes.

And unlike other schemes, managed care pharmacy's approach seeks to balance patient and provider interests with industry requirements for innovation. That's not a bad combination.



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