

Pharmacy Benefit News

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Healthcare Trends Have No Roadblocks

The fate of the American Health Care Bill (AHCA) is in flux, though there are three immutable trends in the US healthcare system that won't change. The first trend is demographic: The US population is continuing to age. Second, technology has become a pervasive element across the health care system, with a major impact on diagnosis, treatment and communications. Third, discoveries in the life sciences that enhance the quality and extend the length of life will continue to flow from research laboratories.

As a result, businesses that help patients to understand, access and use the healthcare system; that allow older patients to receive high-quality care while remaining in place; and that expand the capabilities and reach of electronic health records and digital health applications will benefit. Regardless of how the Health Care Bill evolves, tremendous opportunities will remain in these areas for consumers, medical providers, healthcare payers, and investors to shape and improve the health care system.

Citation: Karpay, F. B. (2017, May 25). 3 Health Care Trends That Don't Hinge on the ACA. Retrieved June 12, 2017, from <https://hbr.org/2017/05/3-health-care-trends-that-dont-hinge-on-the-aca>

Commentary: The expansion of portable digital health tools along with electronic health records, has facilitated smoother transitions of care, easier access to patient files, and a reduction of paper trails. Along with moving into the digital era, it will be easier to see trends and track certain disease states, which can adjust certain screening guidelines and potential treatments. Providing easy electronic access to health records and tracking milestones in health, can lead to a reduction in healthcare costs and a better understanding of the roadmap of burdening disease states. Particularly with an aging population at hand. Improving outcomes and compliance can be two areas of benefit for the expansion of technology in health.

Analytics at Work: A Real World Example

AWP? ASP? AMP?... HELP!

Problem: A client requested help with converting Average Wholesale Price (AWP) discounts to ASP, WAC, NADAC, AMP and other bases of cost. The client was a provider who was receiving contracts from Health Plans, but did not know how to convert and verify the terms of the

agreements for payment for Specialty Medication Pricing. For example, the Plan wanted to pay at ASP +20%, but the provider wanted to know what that meant in AWP-Discount as had been previously paid.

Solution: Pro Pharma developed the conceptual framework and Pro Data Analytics provided the methodology. An algorithm developed the conversion calculations and produced the results in tables that the provider could use for each Specialty Medication that was contracted. The provider was supplied fixed conversions from AWP-to-ASP and other bases of cost. The tables also included variable discounts so that the provider could calculate alternatives as the Plan offered alternatives.

Outcome: The provider achieved its ultimate goal of ensuring that contracted discounts resulted in the required profit margins. The provider also had a negotiation tool that allowed them to calculate costs vs. profits on various contracted discounts.

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Using Technology for Proactive Health

A machine-learning algorithm has been developed which has the capability to identify hospitalized patients at risk for severe sepsis and septic shock using data from electronic health records (EHRs), according to a new study. Sepsis is an extreme systemic response to infection, which can be life-threatening in its advanced stages of severe sepsis and septic shock, if left untreated.

Citation: H. (2017, May 25). UPenn Uses Machine Learning, EHRs to Target Severe Sepsis. Retrieved June 12, 2017, from <http://healthitanalytics.com/news/upenn-uses-machine-learning-ehrs-to-target-severe-sepsis>

Commentary: Like with most algorithms, a particular trend needs to be identified to either provide clinical suggestions or steps to treatment. With certain giveaways, machines can predict whether a patient will be at risk for developing a condition or disease, which can burden the healthcare system if not caught early. There has been a shift of focus from reactive to proactive medicine, but this will be in the hands of the clinicians as opposed to the general population, allowing for greater success rate and prevention rates for at-risk individuals. Using predictive modeling for sepsis is a step forward to opportunities with other burdening disease states.

Communication Increases Compliance to Medical Tests

The US Preventive Services Task Force recommends annual fecal immunochemical test (FIT) as one of the colorectal cancer (CRC) screening tests. Adherence to yearly FIT is crucial to programmatic success. However, longitudinal adherence is low and strategies to improve persistent adherence are needed. The US Preventive Services Task Force evaluated the effectiveness of interactive telephone calls vs automated short message service (SMS) on improving adherence to FIT screening compared with usual care. The telephone groups had significantly higher FIT pick-up and return rates compared with the SMS group, and both the SMS and telephone group had higher return rates than the control group.

Citation: Increased rate of fecal immunochemical test pick-up and return with telephone call, SMS reminder. Retrieved June 12, 2017, from <http://www.physiciansbriefing.com/Article.asp?AID=722918>

Commentary: Starting at the age of 50, all adults are encouraged to obtain a colonoscopy to be screened for colorectal cancer. But there are two barriers, knowledge and attendance. Most individuals are not aware that they are due for a FIT CRC screening, which is a separate issue, but once they are given an appointment, attending that appointment or following up for results has proven to be dismal. CRC is the 3rd most diagnosed cancer and the 2nd deadliest cancer in the US, and deaths can be easily avoided with early screenings. Compliance is a major issue in healthcare, with less than 50% of patients taking their medications on time or completing necessary labs, the results from this study are expanding the role of technology in healthcare. Calls and text messages should be extrapolated to other disease states and other aspects of healthcare, such as appointment reminders, lab results, and much more. Implementing these tools can begin help pave the way of proactive healthcare versus our current reactive society. With this said, there still is not one method that will guarantee 100% compliance, but increasing it from current methods is a step in the right direction.

PROPHARMA

PHARMACEUTICAL CONSULTANTS, INC.



Pro Pharma's JCode Calculator™

JCC

JCode Calculator™

Pro Pharma has developed a Standardized Fee Schedule to assist with management of Claims Payment of self Injectable, vaccines, immunizations, cancer therapeutic agents, and enteral feeding.

JCode Calculator™ is an all-inclusive web based resource that can be integrated into current Medical Claims Payment Systems.

JCode Calculator™ bases all injectable reimbursement on the Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System (HCPCS); defined units, priced utilizing a spectrum of pricing metrics and can be customized for drug category discounts (e.g. chemotherapy) or multiple discounts based on drug type or specialty.

Features & Benefits

- Pricing by Drug-Specific HCPCS-CPT Codes
- NDC Codes
- Brand and Generic Names
- AWP, WAC, & ASP + 6% Pricing
- Strength and Package Size
- Pricing Per Package Size
- Therapeutic Category
- ICD-10 Diagnosis Flags
- Maximum Dose
- Customizable Discount Calculator
- Drug Alert Notifications
- Maximum Quantity
- Rebateable Medications
- Genomic Testing

Client Favorites

Brand/Generic Indicator
Part B & D Indicator Flags
Check if ICD-10 Approved for Drug
Check for FDA Approved Dosing
Easy Web-Based Searching
Purchase by Day/Week/Month/Quarter

Reference Fields Include:

- Average Wholesale Price (**AWP), ASP and WAC by Pricing Unit for every HCPCS Code (including J, Q, A, B, C, and S Codes)
- NDC & CPT Code Descriptions
- Brand/Generic Name
- Strength
- Package Size
- Pricing Unit

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