

# Pharmacy Benefit News

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## “Remnant Cholesterol” is Associated with Increased Cardiovascular Events

Austrian researchers found that remnant cholesterol, calculated by subtracting the sum of LDL and HDL cholesterol from the total cholesterol, can predict the risk of cardiovascular events among type 2 diabetes patients and those without the disease. The findings, presented at the American College of Cardiology's annual conference and based on 1,774 patients with and without diabetes, mean age of 63, revealed that CV risk increased by almost 20% for every 1 standard deviation in remnant cholesterol.

Source: [Endocrinology Advisor](#) (4/7)

### **Commentary:**

Just because we have metric does not make it valuable. Every metric, especially medical metrics, must be validated by independent researchers. This concept is also behind the newer requirements for investigators to provide their data so that journal peer reviewers can validate the results of an individual study. We don't know if the above metric will be validated, perhaps it will be of great value. However, the move to higher standard deviations indicates a move to sicker patients. As a result, this metric may turn out to be of value in higher severity patients. If the metric is validated, then this could be very useful in higher severity atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease (ASCVD) patients.

## Analytics at Work: A Real World Example

### No More Mountains of Paperwork

A client asked Pro Pharma and Pro Data to design a digital system for Request for Proposals (RFPs) that would be more efficient, easier to compare responses, provide in depth financial evaluations, and allow for reviewers to comment and exchange ideas. The goal was to project RFPs into the digital arena and to simplify comparisons to speed up the process and allow for faster and more efficient reviews.

Clients always request for more efficient and faster ways to move through the RFP process. Pro Data Analytics designed a digital format for RFPs that used fixed length responses accepted digitally. Questions were customized to the needs of the client as well as questions commonly used in

the marketplace. The length of responses forces vendors to minimize marketing messages and provide clear and precise answers to RFP questions. The digital format also allowed for faster turnaround of responses. All responses included hyperlinks to supporting documentation. Pro Data added financial analyses from our library that allowed for comparative results and targeted filters to identify differences in the respondents. The RFP digital format also allowed for RFPs to be used for a multiplicity of uses including RFPs for PBMs, drug manufacturers, and clinical comprehensive medication review/medication therapy management (CMR/MTM) vendors.

Results:

comparisons, and more affordable budget impact due to faster turn-around-times. The RFPs were available 24-7 on the cloud so that they could be reviewed from any location. The client was extremely pleased with the in-depth level of explanations and understanding of the process. The more efficient methodology is definitely a "crowd pleaser!"

[Learn More](#)

## Studies Link Presenteeism to Job Demands

An analysis of data from 61 studies showed presenteeism (when people go to work sick) was linked to company policies on absenteeism, limited sick leave and requirements for medical certification of illness. The study in the Journal of Occupational Health Psychology found heavy workloads, understaffing, deadlines and overtime also were motivators for presenteeism.

Source: [Reuters](#) (11/10)

### Commentary:

Pro Pharma has significant experience in predicting presenteeism and absenteeism for employers. Pro Pharma built a model for employers and insurance brokers to use to predict the impact on presenteeism and absenteeism using biometric data. The predictions included the financial impact for the employer. The model produces lists of target employees with actionable plans for lowering their risks of medical complications and improving presenteeism as well as lowering absenteeism. The results are remarkable and are currently driving improvements in wellness in these organizations.

**[Make sure to check out our new, customer friendly, Website.](#)**

## 3 Drug Classes That Can Cause Raynaud's Disease

A literature review published in the British Journal of Clinical Pharmacology identified 12 total drug classes that can cause Raynaud's disease, a syndrome in which blood vessels constrict more than normal in response to cold temperatures or stress. The resultant lack of blood flow can cause numbness and pain. In rare cases, blood circulation to fingers and toes can permanently diminish, leading to deformities.

In very extreme, untreated cases, amputation may be necessary. Drug-induced Raynaud's is a "probably underestimated drug event," the review authors hypothesized.

They advised, "Careful monitoring must be made and, if possible, alternative therapies that do not alter peripheral blood flow should be considered."

### Commentary:

Raynaud's Disease is most commonly associated with certain cancer drugs, beta blockers and migraine medications. Evidence indicates that cancer drugs like cisplatin, bleomycin, Gleevec®, Sprycel®, and Nexavar® are major offenders.

Pharmacists should alert patients taking the common drugs noted above about the potential for this side effect.

In addition to medications, the following conditions contribute to Raynaud's Disease.

- Gender
- Age
- Family history
- Living in cold temperatures
- Having certain diseases and conditions that can directly damage the arteries or nerves that control arteries, such as rheumatoid arthritis or lupus
- Exposure to workplace chemicals, such as vinyl chloride
- Smoking

The House of Representatives passed the Cures Bill in which the emphasis is on increasing National Institutes of Health (NIH) funding. However, many critics point to loosening of potential safety criteria for manufacturers.

It is incumbent on health care professionals to enhance our vigilance on potential drug-induced disease in high risk individuals.





# RFP

## Request For Proposal Management

**Do you want to take the RFP process out of the "dark ages" and into the electronic and web-based world?**

**Are You Tired of Reading Dozens of Bulky 3-Ring Binders?**

**Is Your RFP Process Labor-Intensive and Time-Consuming?**

Pro Pharma uses proprietary templates to help you decide organizational priorities. Weighted vendor scoring methodology makes the final decision making process easier than ever before. We will manage the RFP process from the first compilation of potential vendors through the final selection of the PBM vendor, in conjunction with your staff.

**Pro Pharma has automated the RFP process with the following key features:**

- Viewing of Several Vendor Responses at one viewing
- Comparison Electronically or In Print Format
- Client-Specific Customization
- Key Word Search Capability
- Cost Accounting Analytics for Comparison of Vendor Financial Submissions

Pro Pharma utilizes an integrated data approach to analyze pharmacy and medical encounter claims through problem flagging, feedback benchmarking prices, peer to peer comparison. This program is fully customizable to fit the needs of each client.

**For more information contact:**

Carol Stern, CEO  
(888) 701-5438

[carol.stern@propharmaconsultants.com](mailto:carol.stern@propharmaconsultants.com)

P.O. Box 280130  
Northridge, CA 91328-0130  
(888) 701-5438 | [www.propharmaconsultants.com](http://www.propharmaconsultants.com)

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