

DISCLOSURES

Gilbert and Tonkovic are employees of Coram Specialty Infusion Services Therapy Management.

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■ Online Drug Pricing Tools Deserve More Attention

We read with great interest the article “Evaluation of health plan member use of an online prescription drug price comparison tool” by Carroll and colleagues.¹ The research shows how drug information tools are being used by consumers. We (DestinationRx) have been creating innovative drug and plan comparison tools for more than a decade. In the spirit of disclosure, DestinationRx’s Drug Compare and its predecessor Rxaminer are tools that compete with RxEOB, the online tool that was the subject of the study by Carroll and colleagues. We make available drug pricing tools to more than 100 million Americans, and as such we have comments on 3 points that your readers may find helpful.

First, while we do have a consumer version of Drug Compare that shows drug costs based on estimated community pharmacy prices, the vast majority of our users are accessing plan- and/or PBM-sponsored sites. These sites come loaded with member-specific benefit information including formulary, utilization management restrictions, drug tiers, member copay and pharmacy-specific price comparisons. Second, Carroll

and colleagues found that approximately 5.2% of families in a large integrated health plan who used the pharmacy benefit throughout the year used the MyPharmacyTools (RxEOB) online pricing tool in a 12-month period from July 2007 through June 2008. We found that 5.8% (n=4,087) of approximately 71,000 employees enrolled in health savings accounts used our Drug Compare online tool in a 9-month study period through October 2010.²

Third, we agree that drug pricing is of paramount concern to end-users. We believe that filtering the alternatives displayed based on comparative efficacy leads to even greater adoption and behavior change. It is for this reason that we always emphasize that beyond pricing it is imperative to display therapeutic alternatives of similar efficacy.

Our experience shows that drug costs are still one of the most controllable of all health care expenditures, and we are glad to see drug information tools getting the visibility they deserve for allowing members to better manage their health care and drug spend.

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DISCLOSURES

Grunewald is employed by DestinationRx.

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