

Pharmacy Briefing | December 2022

THE LATEST ON PHARMACY NEWS, TRENDS, AND INSIGHTS

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Highlights

- **Hemgenix (etranacogene dezaparvovec)** is approved as a gene therapy to treat hemophilia B, carries a \$3.5 million list price.
- **Prime Therapeutics** finalizes acquisition of Magellan Rx Management
- **Express Scripts and Optum** disclose formulary strategy for Humira biosimilar launches
- **Drug Channels** discusses gross-to-net bubble in annual drug pricing update

FDA Approvals and Launches

- **Hemgenix (etranacogene dezaparvovec)** is approved as a gene therapy to treat hemophilia B, carries a \$3.5 million list price.
- **Rezvoglar (insulin glargine-aglr)** is approved as the second interchangeable biosimilar to long-acting insulin *Lantus*.
- **Leqembi (lecanemab)** is approved to treat Alzheimer's disease.
- **Sunlenca (lenacapavir)**, administered as an injection once every 6 months, is approved to treat HIV.
- **Briumvi (ublituximab-xiyy)** is approved to treat relapsing forms of multiple sclerosis.

News

Prime Therapeutics finalizes acquisition of Magellan Rx Management

- Magellan currently serves 1.7 million members and will continue to operate independently in the near future.

[Read more](#)

Express Scripts and Optum disclose formulary strategy for *Humira* biosimilar launches

- Express Scripts will add an unspecified number of *Humira* biosimilars to its national formularies as co-preferred products.
- Optum will also retain *Humira* as a preferred product and plans to add up to three biosimilars as co-preferred products.
- CVS has not publicly disclosed their formulary strategy for these products.

[Read more \(1\)](#) [Read more \(2\)](#)

IQVIA publishes “Lessons from Semglee: Early Perspectives on Pharmacy Biosimilars”

- The report discusses the delayed adoption of the insulin biosimilar and provides insight on the upcoming launches of *Humira* biosimilars.

[Read more](#)

Regence health plans champion biosimilar adoption, claims \$37 million in annual savings

- Regence, a parent company of four Blues affiliates, reports a 95% biosimilar adoption rate.

- An increase in adoption was encouraged through a comprehensive strategy that included communication campaigns to members and providers, as well as the removal of prior authorization requirements.

[Read more](#)

Drug Channels discusses gross-to-net bubble in annual drug pricing update

- The report claims that prices for drugs have decreased for the fifth consecutive year after accounting for rebates and inflation.
- The gross-to-net bubble, which describes the difference between drug list prices and net prices, continues to increase.

[Read more](#)

Manufacturers introduce annual list price hikes

- Products with price increases include shingles vaccine *Shingrix*, auto-immune drug *Xeljanz*, and cancer drugs *Ibrance* and *Xalkori*.
- A Pfizer spokesperson claims that the average price increases are well below the inflation rate and that, after accounting for rebates, net prices have fallen over the past four years.

[Read more](#)

Optum publishes “New regulations to watch: Winter 2022”

- The PBM predicts that Medicare-related provisions in the Inflation Reduction Act may indirectly impact commercial clients by causing higher launch prices for new drugs.
- A California “gold card” bill allowing health care providers to bypass prior authorization requirements was defeated in the state legislature.

[Read more](#)

Magellan publishes 2022 Medical Pharmacy Trend Report

- The report examined utilization of provider-administered drugs, including drugs commonly used to treat cancer, autoimmune disorders and immunodeficiencies.
- The top commercial drug spend drivers in 2021 were oncology drugs *Darzalex Faspro* and *Keytruda*, as well as eye disease drug *Tepezza*.

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Evernorth adds *Skysona* to Embarc Benefit Protection program

- The program, which requires a per-member-per-month enrollment fee, is intended to help protect plans from expensive gene therapy claims and currently covers *Luxturna*, *Zolgensma*, *Zynteglo*, and *Skysona*.

[Read more](#)

FDA removes in-person dispensing requirement for abortion drug mifepristone

- Certified retail and mail-order pharmacies will now be able to dispense the drug.

[Read more](#)

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