PBMs SUPPORT PATIENTS WITH DIABETES

Diabetes is the seventh leading cause of death in the U.S., affecting 37.3 million Americans, or 1 in 10 people.[1] People living with diabetes are at an increased risk for many serious health problems. In addition to the negative health impacts, diabetes is also an expensive condition—**in 2017, it cost the average person living with diabetes $9,601 for medical diabetes care.**[2] Unfortunately, there is no cure for diabetes. There are, however, prescription drugs that can be used to manage it. Pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs) work to help patients stay on their medication schedule (adherence) and alleviate high drug costs issues that may arise with diabetes.

THERE ARE MANY DRUGS AVAILABLE THAT HELP PATIENTS WITH DIABETES MANAGE THEIR CONDITION. THIS INCLUDES:

Insulin: used to regulate blood sugar levels and vital for people living with type 1 diabetes.

Metformin (the most commonly prescribed oral hypoglycemic agent): used to treat high blood sugar levels for people with type 2 diabetes.

Other antidiabetic drugs: used to help regulate the body's glucose and insulin levels.

PBMs negotiate with drug manufacturers to lower costs for these drugs and recommend to plan sponsors and insurers programs to lower or eliminate patient cost sharing for them.

PBMs also directly engage patients with diabetes through programs that promote adherence and healthy lifestyles. These types of programs improve prescription drug adherence in diabetes patients, preventing 450,000 emergency department visits related to high and low blood sugar levels annually.[3]

ADHERENCE PROGRAMS

- **Remote monitoring adherence program:** PBMs monitor and measure a patient's glucose levels through "smart glucometers" and conduct outreach if patients need medication support.[4]
- **Wearable digital devices:** PBMs offer continuous glucose monitors (CGMs), which are small sensors placed under or on the skin for continual monitoring of blood glucose levels. These sensors test every few minutes and send data wirelessly to the patient's PBM.[4]

PATIENT SUPPORT PROGRAMS

- **Direct management programs:** PBMs work with certified diabetes care and education specialists to deliver individualized education and case management to patients.[4]
- **Clinical engagement programs:** PBM experts assist patients with lifestyle changes, including nutrition and exercise.[4]
- **Zero or low cost sharing:** PBMs offer programs to cap or eliminate monthly insulin costs for patients, enhancing accessibility and affordability.[5]

For patients participating in a diabetes adherence program, their A1C levels were reduced by an average 1.5 points.[5]

1 Centers for Disease Control. "The Facts, Stats, and Impacts of Diabetes."
2 American Diabetes Association. "The Cost of Diabetes."
3 Visante. "The Return on Investment (ROI) on PBM Services, 2020."
4 RTI International. "Expanding Awareness and Knowledge of the Value of Pharmacy Benefit Manager Clinical Programs." Unreleased, 2021.
5 IRS. "IRS expands list of preventive care for HSA participants to include certain care for chronic conditions." 2019.

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