



Market Insight-Hemophilia

It wasn't too long ago that a \$12 million hemophilia case made the headlines sparking widespread speculation about what type of illness could lead to such colossal medical bills. How can anyone rack up more than a million dollars a month in medical treatment claims? We have all experienced how aggressive treatment for a complicated case can lead to such costs.

Hemophilia is a rare congenital bleeding disorder characterized by spontaneous and potentially life-threatening bleeding episodes. As a result, blood is sluggish to clot after an injury, resulting in painful bleeding into muscle tissue and joints. According to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, hemophilia occurs in approximately 1 in 5,000 live births. There are about 20,000 people with hemophilia in the US. All races and ethnic groups are affected. Hemophilia A is four times as common as hemophilia B while more than half of patients with hemophilia A have the severe form of hemophilia.

The standard treatment for hemophilia A consists of factor VIII replacement products (recombinant or plasma-derived). Treatment for hemophilia B consists of factor IX replacement products (also plasma-derived or recombinant). Hemophilia A is typically treated by administering intravenous doses of the missing blood factor. Factor VIII replacement is given both for the acute treatment of active bleeds and prophylactically to prevent bleeds from occurring.

Not only is Hemophilia a rare disease, it is very expensive to manage. The average annual cost of treatment is \$711,606 and can reach \$4M or more according to Express Scripts Super Spending U.S. Trends in High-Cost Medication Use Report October 2017.

There are several new long-acting hemophilia factor agents that have recently entered the market which has helped deliver significant benefits and treatment improvements for patients.

And, looking forward, there are several new hemophilia gene therapy treatments in development using advanced technology in clinical trials.

The Sequoia Branch Program Solution

Managing hemophilia treatments and costs can be challenging for payers given all the variables and complexities. Having the visibility and expertise with a rigorous prior authorization process and ongoing clinical monitoring is key. Understanding safe and efficacious uses of the drug treatments at the beginning of the proposed therapy and on an ongoing basis is critical. Treatment outcomes are also key to understand whether members are achieving and maintaining a reduction in frequency of bleeding episodes.

The Sequoia Branch Program provides access to expert clinical pharmacists and coding specialists that can review high cost specialty claims to ensure that accepted clinical protocols are followed to support effective outcomes and mitigate risk.

To learn more about the treatment, costs and how to manage this risk, contact Jakki Lynch, Director of Cost Containment directly at (415) 360-5197 or by email jlynch@sequoiaris.com