

188 of 999 DOCUMENTS

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Walgreens Study Shows Pharmacy Interventions Significantly Reduce Health Care Costs, Improve Outcomes

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Nov. 2 -- Pharmacy interventions for patients starting new **medications** can improve **adherence**, lower health care utilization and reduce overall health care costs, according to a new study released by Walgreens. The study, "Improving **Medication Adherence** and Healthcare Outcomes in a Commercial Population Through a Retail Pharmacy Chain," is one of the first to quantify the total savings this type of approach to **medication** management can generate for patients and payers. It was presented at the Academy of Managed Care Pharmacy (AMCP) Conference in Orlando, Fla. last week.

"This data demonstrates that reaching patients when they start new **medications** through multiple pharmacy-led channels, including one-on-one consultations, can play an important role in driving better health outcomes," said Harry Leider, M.D., Walgreens chief medical officer. "These interventions, along with ongoing support from pharmacy staff, translate into patients being less likely to end up in high-cost settings like the hospital or emergency room."

The study, conducted as a collaboration between Walgreens Health Services and Outcomes Research and IMS Health, evaluated patients starting new **medications** across 16 drug classes, and analyzed the difference in outcomes between patients who received pharmacy interventions at Walgreens, and a control group of matched non-Walgreens control patients over a six-month period. The interventions included pharmacist consultations, both face-to-face and over the phone, and reminders for prescription refills and pick-up via automated calls, text messages and e-mail.

Highlights from the study show that benefits for the patient group receiving pharmacy interventions included:

- * Total 6-month cost savings of \$164, or 3 percent per patient
- * 3 percent greater **medication adherence**
- * Nearly 2 percent lower hospital admissions
- * Nearly 3 percent lower emergency room visits and \$38 lower emergency room costs per patient

The Walgreens Health Services and Outcomes Research team consists of scientists and analysts who conduct analyses and studies to evaluate the impact of products and services to improve health status, quality of care and health care costs. These applied studies are often published in peer reviewed journals and presented at scientific conferences to validate study integrity.

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