

THE VALUE OF QUICK RESPONSE TIMES FROM TRUSTED ANALYSIS

ANALYTICS IN ACTION

MIGRAINE MEDICATION UTILIZATION METRICS CASE STUDY



Background

Large companies with self-funded healthcare plans are faced with many demands. There is pressure to continually enhance the quality of the employee experience while improving outcomes. And then there is the added pressure to manage costs. Closely monitoring available data can help administrators maintain the delicate balance needed to keep all parties satisfied.



The Concern

When one of Health Data & Management Solutions' (HDMS) large retail clients made a major prescription drug vendor change, their costs for migraine medications began rising. The retailer's analysts noticed that the number of members filling prescriptions for a new self-injectable (high priced) drug used to treat migraines had jumped from just 17 in 2019 to over 125 in the first four months with the new vendor. This one drug had cost the retailer an additional \$65,000 per month, which was unusual.

As the client began evaluating the situation, they wondered if members were making a natural transition from the typically prescribed Botox to the costly, self-injectable medication. But such a large increase in the number of members making the switch suggested that there might be some other reason. The client turned to HDMS to investigate why costs were rising: was this simply a normal medication transition, or was there something else going on behind the scenes?



The Results

With a large amount of data already at their fingertips, HDMS went right to work. The HDMS account representative dove into historical medication records evaluating prescribing patterns, utilization trends, unit costs, and within hours determined the cause. He was able to provide several insights to the client the day after the request was made.

The HDMS team found the following:

- There were no clear patterns on the physician and pharmacy side.
- Most members who used Botox treatments prior to 2020 continued using Botox.

This confirmed it was not a natural medication progression, but it didn't explain the change in the pattern of utilization. The HDMS team pivoted and began looking for other factors. They discovered the answer when analyzing if there were coverage changes when the new vendor was brought on board.

The HDMS team found that the new high-priced self-injectable medication had not been covered under the old vendor's policy. But with the new vendor, it was covered – and the client was actually splitting the cost with no out-of-pocket costs for the member. The client realized that it was something that was overlooked when the switch was made.



The Takeaway

In this case, analysis occurred overnight, allowing the client to promptly reevaluate plan details, coverages, and policy differences. HDMS' robust analytical tools promote:

Swift Response Times – Prompt, accurate analysis allows actionable steps to be taken quickly.

Program Clarity – Overall plan or program performance levels are easier to ascertain when a more complete picture can be seen.

Cost-saving Opportunities –

Well-informed and data-driven decisions often result in cost savings. By identifying the source of the issue in this case, the client saved an estimated \$400,000 for the remainder of the year.

