



Contact: Sheila Thelemann  
Prime Therapeutics  
Director, PR and Marketing  
Communications  
612.777.5508  
sthelemann@primetherapeutics.com

## **Journal of Managed Care Pharmacy Recognizes Prime Therapeutics Pharmacists with 2009 *JMCP* Award for Excellence**

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SAN DIEGO, CALIF., APRIL 8, 2010 – Prime Therapeutics LLC (Prime), a thought leader in pharmacy benefit management, announced today that four of its clinical research pharmacists received the *Journal of Managed Care Pharmacy's* (*JMCP*) 2009 Award for Excellence for research examining the relationship between member out-of-pocket (OOP) costs and the number of patients who abandon high-cost specialty medications. The research team was recognized last night at the Academy of Managed Care Pharmacy's 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting & Showcase awards dinner in San Diego.

The authors, Patrick P. Gleason, PharmD, BCPS, FCCP; Catherine I. Starner, PharmD, BCPS, CGP; Brent W. Gunderson, PharmD and Jeremy A. Schafer, PharmD collaborated with researchers from one of its Blue Cross and Blue Shield clients to study a database of 13 million health plan members. The research included more than 10,000 members who received a new prescription for an injectable multiple sclerosis (MS) medication or an injectable tumor necrosis factor (TNF) blocker, which is primarily prescribed for rheumatoid arthritis, from July 2006 to June 2008.

The study found that patients were significantly more likely to abandon their medication, meaning they do not fill their initial prescription, when OOP costs exceeded \$200 per claim for MS medications and \$100 per claim for TNF blockers.

"Members with high out-of-pocket costs who are not filling their prescriptions could face serious health complications, and as a result, substantial medical expenses for both the patient and health insurer," said Gleason, lead author and Director of Clinical Outcomes Assessment for Prime. "This research suggests lower specialty drug member out-of-pocket costs may result in better health outcomes and reduced total health care costs. Consequently, the results could have a significant impact on pharmacy benefit design."

The article was selected for the award because it discusses an outcome (prescription abandonment) that is not well-studied and it addresses two important areas for health plans: management of cost and utilization of specialty pharmaceuticals, and the influence of member cost-sharing on drug abandonment. Gleason, Starner and Schafer also received the 2008 *JMCP* Award for Excellence for their analysis of the effect patient safety warnings released by the FDA had on utilization of important oral diabetes drugs.

The research recognized last night was originally published in the October 2009 issue of *JMCP* and is available at [www.amcp.org/data/jmcp/648-658.pdf](http://www.amcp.org/data/jmcp/648-658.pdf).

**Source**

Gleason PP, et al. Association of Prescription Abandonment with Cost Share for High-Cost Specialty Medications. J Manag Care Pharm. 2009;15(8):648-58.

**Prime Therapeutics** is a pharmacy benefit management company dedicated to providing innovative, clinically-based, cost-effective pharmacy solutions for clients and members. Providing pharmacy benefit services nationwide to approximately 14.7 million covered lives, its client base includes Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans, employer and union groups, and third-party administrators. Headquartered in St. Paul, Minnesota, Prime Therapeutics is collectively owned by 12 Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans, subsidiaries or affiliates of those Plans. Learn more at [www.primetherapeutics.com](http://www.primetherapeutics.com).

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