Savings documented and validated by change in claims post intervention or approval by the plan.

**RESULTS**

- **Among 1.5 million commercially insured members, approximately 1,500 (~0.1%) members’ drug regimens were reviewed, resulting in 365 members for which a potential savings opportunity was found during the 12 months.**

- **Twenty-six of the 365 (~5%) members with potential opportunities resulted in validated savings totaling ~$0.1 million. The 20 validated savings opportunities encompassed multiple types of interventions, such as dose consolidation, pack size optimization, dose form changes, and pharmacy or member outreach.**

- **Successful process interventions by the SDMC pharmacist accounted for ~$1.7 million in savings.**

**LIMITATIONS**

- As there was no control group, it is unknown if the drug therapy regimens and subsequent savings would have occurred regardless of a SDMC pharmacist intervention.

- Available claims data allowed only for calculating the savings resulting from specialty drug regimen changes. Thus, potential downstream savings or costs from the interventions impact on other health resources (e.g., appointments, ER visits or hospitalizations) were not included.

- Data is limited to one health plan commercial pharmacy or member outreach) as determined by the pharmacist intervention could not be determined. Savings were classified as: changes in drug dosing, therapy changes, PA approval process changes, or PA recovery and future claims savings.

**CONCLUSIONS**

- **A savings of ~$3.7 million occurred in the first year of the Specialty Drug Managed Care (SDMC) pharmacist surveilling specialty drug therapy for 1.5 million commercially insured members. It resulted in a large return on investment of 9:1, similar to that found with another similar program.**

- **This study highlights the need for a SDMC pharmacist and the importance of their access to integrated pharmacy and medical claims data.**

- **A dedicated SDMC pharmacist provides vital real-world surveillance and feedback into upstream formulary or utilization management processes, ensuring appropriate drug management controls are in place.**

- **This study reveals the need for automated detection of previously identified opportunities that the pharmacist had to review ~1,500 members to find two process interventions and 26 member-level interventions. Automation will reduce time needed to identify opportunities.**

**REFERENCES**

1. *Accuracy and Efficiency: Validating the Financial Impact of Pharmacist Interventions.* JMCP 20 member-level interventions. Automation will reduce time needed to identify opportunities.

**OBJECTIVE**

- Assess the financial impact of a full-time SDMC pharmacist dedicated to reviewing specialty drug utilizers using integrated medical and pharmacy claims and PA data, for drug optimization.

**METHODS**

- From August 2018 to July 2019 (12 months), the SDMC pharmacist, in collaboration with the Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS) plan pharmacy department, selectively reviewed members utilizing specialty drug therapies identified through an analysis of integrated medical and pharmacy claims and PA data among 1.5 million commercially insured lives.

- The SDMC pharmacist applied their clinical knowledge of specialty drugs, along with interpretation of claims and PA data, to evaluate identified members’ drug therapy regimens in order to ensure appropriate use, identify suspicious utilization, and discover savings opportunities (Figure 1).

**BACKGROUND**

- Specialty drugs are the fastest growing expense within the pharmacy benefit and are an increasing component of medical benefit expenditures.

- Because specialty drugs have high unit costs, are found on both the medical and pharmacy benefits, have complex dosing and treatment regimens, and regimens, and have the potential for fraud, waste and abuse (FWA), they require close oversight and review by a pharmacist.

- Integrated medical and pharmacy claims, as well as prior authorization (PA) data, offer a means to oversight as they provide vital real-world specialty drug use and administration behavior.

- A specialty drug managed care (SDMC) pharmacist equipped with knowledge of specialty drugs, claims, and PA data may provide crucial surveillance on specialty drug therapies, which may result in significant savings and a positive return on investment (ROI).

- Previous research from one Blue Plan in 2018 found a SDMC pharmacist team resulted in a 10:1 ROI. It is important this finding is confirmed with another insurer.

- A dedicated SDMC pharmacist (SDMC) pharmacist provided vital real-world surveillance and feedback into upstream formulary or utilization management processes, ensuring appropriate drug management controls are in place. This program will continue to evolve as the program will continue to evolve as new modeling capabilities are incorporated.