A Route to Adopting Biosimilars

Based on the experience at a major health care institution. The adoption process and roles may vary by institution.

1 Deciding to adopt a biosimilar

Electing to adopt a biosimilar should begin by building knowledge about the product, followed by gaining a general agreement among stakeholders in the organization.

Building knowledge

Physicians · Supply Chain · Pharmacy Director or Change Leader · Finance Director · Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee · Department Chairs

- Evaluating the clinical and financial implications of pursuing a biosimilar switch, including obtaining input from physicians, the supply chain, and other stakeholders
- Investigating the clinical evidence
  - Examining the available information/data
  - Reviewing the Prescribing Information
- Assessing the possibility of long-term savings to the organization, specifically for pharmacy directors, procurement and supply chain specialists, and finance directors

Assessing the payer landscape

Coverage & Reimbursement · Pharmacy Director or Change Leader · Finance Director · Supply Chain · Health Care Professionals

- Getting an initial understanding of the payer landscape

Building a consensus

Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee · Department Chairs

- Presenting recommendations to the pharmacy and therapeutics committee for their buy-in
- Obtaining endorsements from department chairs

2 Implementing a biosimilar

Once the organization has decided to pursue the adoption of a biosimilar, certain steps should be followed to begin the transition to implementation. Communicating with stakeholders and educating patients about switching to a biosimilar can be instrumental to overall success.

Updating systems

Pharmacy Director or Change Leader · Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee · Department Chairs

- Optimizing the electronic health record (EHR) system
- Streamlining order sets and protocols

Additional considerations

- Inventory control
  - Stocking of new product
  - Handling of mixed inventory
- Prescribing
  - Approved Indications
    - Dosing and frequency
    - Route of administration
- Reimbursement team and payer communications
- Possible reassignment of staff to identify patients and convert existing orders
  - What can be done for naïve patients?
  - Who will convert orders for non-naïve patients?
- Proactive patient communication

Addressing payer landscape and reimbursement

Coverage & Reimbursement · Pharmacy Director or Change Leader · Finance Director · Supply Chain · Health Care Professionals

- Identifying appropriate patients
- Reviewing billing requirements
- Assessing the payer formulary
- Evaluating payer utilization management criteria
- Researching patient support programs

Educating and communicating key information

Patients · Pharmacists · Health Care Professionals

- Determining the implementation date
- Outlining possible changes to the EHR system
- Addressing insurance information
- Communicating to patients that they are being switched to a biosimilar that has shown no clinically meaningful differences in terms of safety, purity, and potency

Going live

Coverage & Reimbursement · Patients · Health Care Professionals · Pharmacists

- Supporting patients through patient access programs
- Providing physicians, nurses, pharmacists, and patients with a resource that includes consistent contact information for questions

3 Monitoring biosimilar use and experience

Once a biosimilar has been implemented, a system should be established to measure the quality of the health care professional and patient experience, the utilization of the biosimilar, and the impact of biosimilar adoption on the organization as a whole.

Measuring and proving success

Pharmacy Director or Change Leader · Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee · Department Chairs

- Regularly reporting (eg, quarterly) to department chairs, the hospital administration, and the organization's pharmacy and therapeutics committee

Possible reporting data

- Access and reimbursement issues
- Drug use evaluations
  - Adverse drug reactions
  - Efficacy and patient outcomes
- Overall patient experience
- Conversion rate
- Inventory control
- Stocking of new product
- Handling of mixed inventory

As the health care landscape continues to change, consider whether adopting biosimilars presents an opportunity for your organization.

Merck does not guarantee that your use of this information will help you achieve your biosimilars goals.
This educational resource was prepared in consultation with and with the permission of a health care administrator at a major health care institution who had successfully implemented a biosimilars switch within their organization.

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