



## Advocating on behalf of Michigan's pharmacy professionals for quality patient care

### KEY STATEMENT

Pharmacists strengthen patient health and decrease costs by providing medication therapy management (MTM) services.

### BACKGROUND

MTM is directly addressed in the new health care reform package, and the law now recognizes the key role that pharmacists play in one-on-one consultations to optimize patient medication use and help them best manage their therapies to improve chronic diseases. Medicare does reimburse for MTM services, but only a fraction of seniors qualify or are given an opportunity to take advantage of this critical protection. Medicaid has considered introduce programs to help patients better manage their medications and lower health care costs through direct consultation with a pharmacist, but those MTM programs have not been initiated through the Department. Some health plans and physician groups have participated in pharmacist-led pilot projects in Michigan to launch MTM services to better serve patients in the patient-centered medical home, and results show key health improvements and reduction of costs.

### WHAT IS MEDICATION THERAPY MANAGEMENT?

- Through MTM, pharmacists help patients effectively manage all of their medications and treatments during review, counseling, collaboration with other health professionals and follow up.
- MTM keeps patients safe by ensuring that all of their medications are working properly together and are not dangerously interacting with each other. It also puts patients in the driver's seat of their health by helping them be proactive in setting therapy goals and pharmacists following up to be sure that patients get the most from their medications.
- MTM is proven to help patients reduce their health care costs, which is so critical in this economy. Patients who are receiving medication therapy management services from their pharmacists are often spending less on medications because a pharmacist is continually making sure their therapy is still effective. Also, patients are more likely to remain committed to their medication regimen, which improves their health and reduces their overall costs by preventing future issues.

### MTM WORKS. HERE'S HOW:

- In the "Asheville Project", city employees participated in pharmacist-led MTM for blood pressure and cholesterol. After MTM, patients achieved goals more than 25-30 percent than the baseline, and ER visits due to cardiovascular events were cut in half. This resulted in a decrease of cardiovascular-related costs of more than 11 percent of the city's total health care costs.
- In a 14-month program at Chrysler's Sterling Heights Assembly plant, a pharmacist met with employees with diabetes. The pharmacist worked with each patient on managing their diabetes and addressing the concerns of



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workers regarding their disease. Results showed the employees health improved and their “sick time” off work decreased.

- In another study, diabetic patients were referred by their physicians to pharmacists for drug therapy management. Pharmacist intervention helped patients manage their diabetes and achieve better glucose control. These patients also had less ER visits after one-on-one interactions with their pharmacists, saving each patient an average of \$1,798 per year, or \$197,780 total among the study participants.
- A group of community pharmacies partnered with asthma patients in an ongoing cycle of assessment, goal setting, monitoring and evaluation of their conditions over a six-month period. At the end of the study, patients who had received pharmacist care were nearly three time more likely to no longer have severe symptoms vs. the control group.

## BOTTOM LINE

**Pharmacist-provided MTM services must become the standard for patients who have multiple conditions and drug therapies.** Patients will receive better comprehensive care, get the most from their medicines and improve their well-being, and health care costs will decrease as a result. Reimbursement should adequately address the value of this critical, cost-saving service.



## Additional Information

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