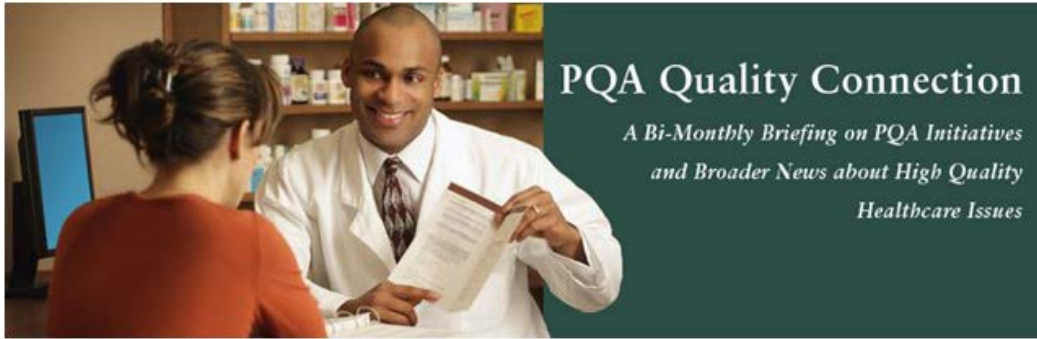




Hot Off the Press: Connections to Key Quality Publications

Hot Off the Press seeks to connect the reader to the most relevant and recent trials, reviews and commentaries related to health care quality with a focus on medication- and pharmacy-related topics.

Topic: Medication Adherence

- **Citation:** Dharmarajan S, Bentley J, Banahan B, West-Strum D. Measuring Pharmacy Performance in the Area of Medication Adherence: Addressing the Issue of Risk Adjustment. *Journal of Managed Care & Specialty Pharmacy*. October 2014; 20(10):1057-68.
- **Description:** A retrospective study was conducted which analyzed Mississippi Medicare claims data to compute pharmacy performance scores in the area of medication adherence. Proportion of days covered (PDC), the metric used by Medicare to determine Part C and D Star Ratings, was calculated for seven different therapeutic classes of medications for each pharmacy, and then combined to create a composite score. The study adjusted the pharmacy-level composite scores using two logistic regression models that took patient comorbidity, socioeconomic status, and demographics into account. Each model demonstrated good predictive ability for adherence, and suggested that patient-level factors may lead to unreliable assessments of pharmacy quality without risk adjustment.

Topic: Value of Specialty Medications

- **Citation:** Brennan T, Lotvin A, Shrank W. Analysis of “Real World” Sovaldi® (sofosbuvir). CVS Health. September 2014.
- **Description:** Sovaldi, a drug manufactured and launched by Gilead in December of 2013, represents a highly anticipated and effective therapy for Hepatitis C, a disease that affects more than three million Americans. Sovaldi is highly expensive, costing about \$1,000 per pill and \$84,000 for a 12-week course of treatment. CVS Health conducted analyses on its experience with Sovaldi over the past nine months and published the results in a White Paper. Adherence to therapy being the crux of a Hepatitis C cure, the

white paper reports “real world” trends in Sovaldi utilization and discontinuation rates versus those reported in clinical trials. CVS Health-affiliated patients were found to have an overall Sovaldi discontinuation rate four times greater than that reported in clinical trials. Treatment-naïve patients were more likely to discontinue Sovaldi-based therapy compared to treatment-experienced patients, and discontinuation rates were lower in CVS Health outlets, such as CVS Pharmacy retail stores and CVS Caremark Specialty Pharmacies. CVS Health expects this data will drive a focus on strategies to improve adherence and assist payors and providers in prioritizing treatment approaches.