

# Understanding Competition in Prescription Drug Markets

## Entry and Supply Chain Dynamics

November 8, 2017

# Introductory Remarks

**Svetlana S. Gans**  
Chief of Staff  
Federal Trade Commission

# Keynote Remarks

**Maureen K. Ohlhausen**  
Acting Chairman  
Federal Trade Commission

# Keynote Remarks

**Scott Gottlieb, M.D.**

Commissioner

U.S. Food and Drug Administration

# Understanding Competition in Prescription Drug Markets: Entry and Supply Chain Dynamics

Panel 1: Generic Drug Competition: Understanding Demand, Price and  
Supply Issues

Division of

**Pharmacoepidemiology & Pharmacoeconomics**

Department of Medicine, Brigham & Women's Hospital, Harvard Medical School

# **Promoting Timely and Effective Gene Drug Markets**

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November 8, 2017

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*Program On Regulation, Therapeutics, And Law*

# What is PORTAL?

more faculty with expertise in medicine, business, law, epidemiology, ethics; post-docs and numerous students

research on interactions among the regulatory, legal, economic, and clinical components of pharmaceutical marketplace

largest and most prolific independent research group in the country focused on these issues  
current research funding from Harvard Program in Therapeutic Science, Laura and John Arnold Foundation, Engelberg Foundation

– Past research funding from FDA CDRH, Commonwealth Fund, Harvard Clinical and Translational Science Center, AHRQ, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, CVS Caremark, FDA Office of Drugs, Greenwall Faculty Scholars Foundation in Bioethics

Twitter: @PORTAL\_research; Website: [www.PORTALresearch.org](http://www.PORTALresearch.org)

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# Prescription Drug Spending in the US

Rose 12% in 2015, 6% in 2016 to \$450 billion

- 22% of health care spending (IMS)
- 19% of Medicare spending (MEDPAC)

International per capita comparisons

- US: **\$858**; avg 19 industrialized countries: **\$400**

Due to brand-name drug prices

- 10% prescriptions, 72% of spending

20% of patients in 2016 reported that they or another family member did not fill a prescription due to cost

Patients prescribed a costly branded product rather than a more affordable generic alternative adhere less well, and have worse outcomes

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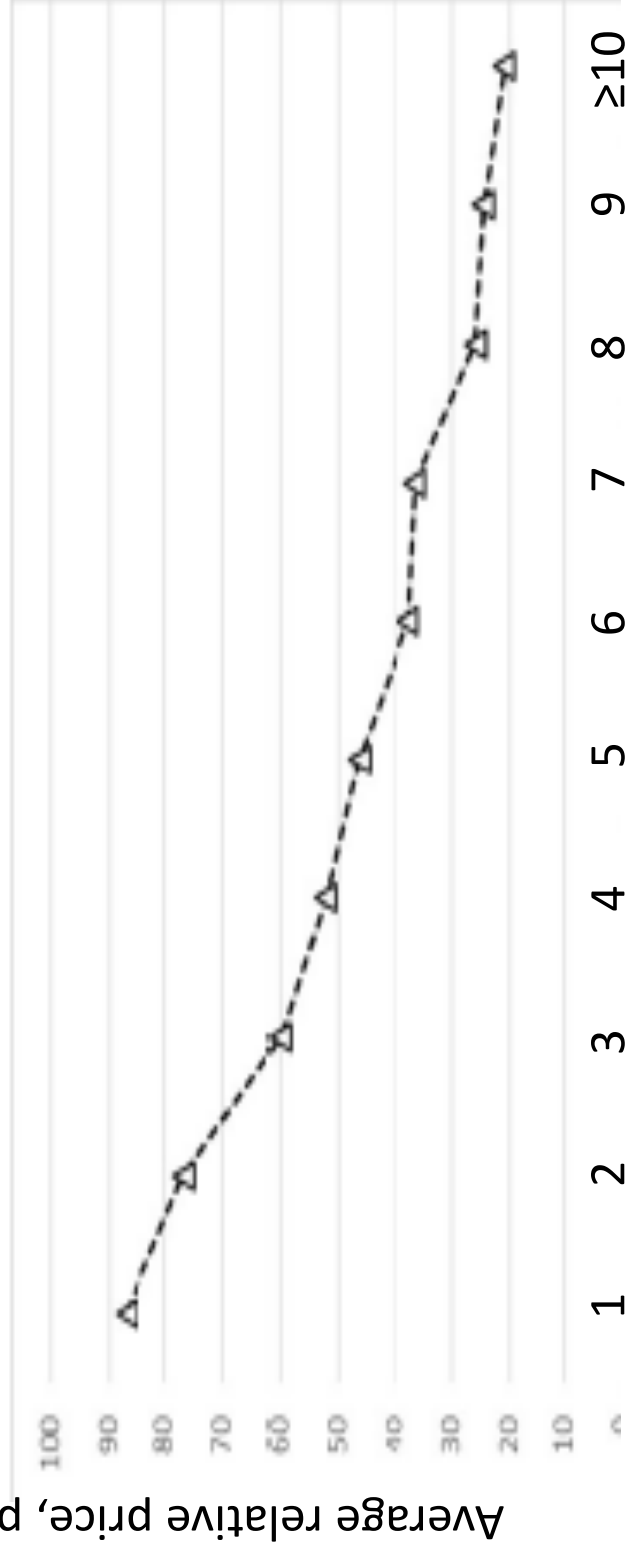
Kesselheim et al., JAMA, 2016; Shrank et al, Archives Int Med 2006; Gagne et al, Annals of Int Med, 2014; DiJulio et al., Kaiser Family Foundation



# Generic drugs

Generic competition consistently and substantially lowers prescription drug prices

— Abbreviated FDA approval process, state Drug Product Selection facilitate automatic substitution



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Dave, Hartzema, Kesselheim (unpublished data)

# actors affecting generic drug use

## Advertising/promotion



**ipitor instead of a generic:**  
o generic form of Lipitor. If you switch  
o a generic of a different medication.

udies, Lipitor lowered bad  
l significantly more than Zocor.  
s over 400 ongoing or completed  
als. In fact, Lipitor has more studies that  
-related and stroke benefits" than Zocor,  
er generic cholesterol medicine.

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**Affordable Cancer Medications Are Within Reach but We Need a Different Approach**

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Leroy Lowe

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**To the Editor:**

The recent *Journal of Clinical Oncology* Special Issue on Global Cancer Medicine was a welcome dialogue on a global crisis. As Schulman and Mink<sup>1</sup> suggested, some improvements in access to essential cancer medicines have been made, but many countries have little or no affordable cancer medicines. Indeed, as the pricing for cancer therapies has escalated, there has been increasing concern. This includes a petition by US cancer physicians calling for lower prices,<sup>2</sup> and a recent editorial in *The*

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JCO May 9, 2016; JCO092438

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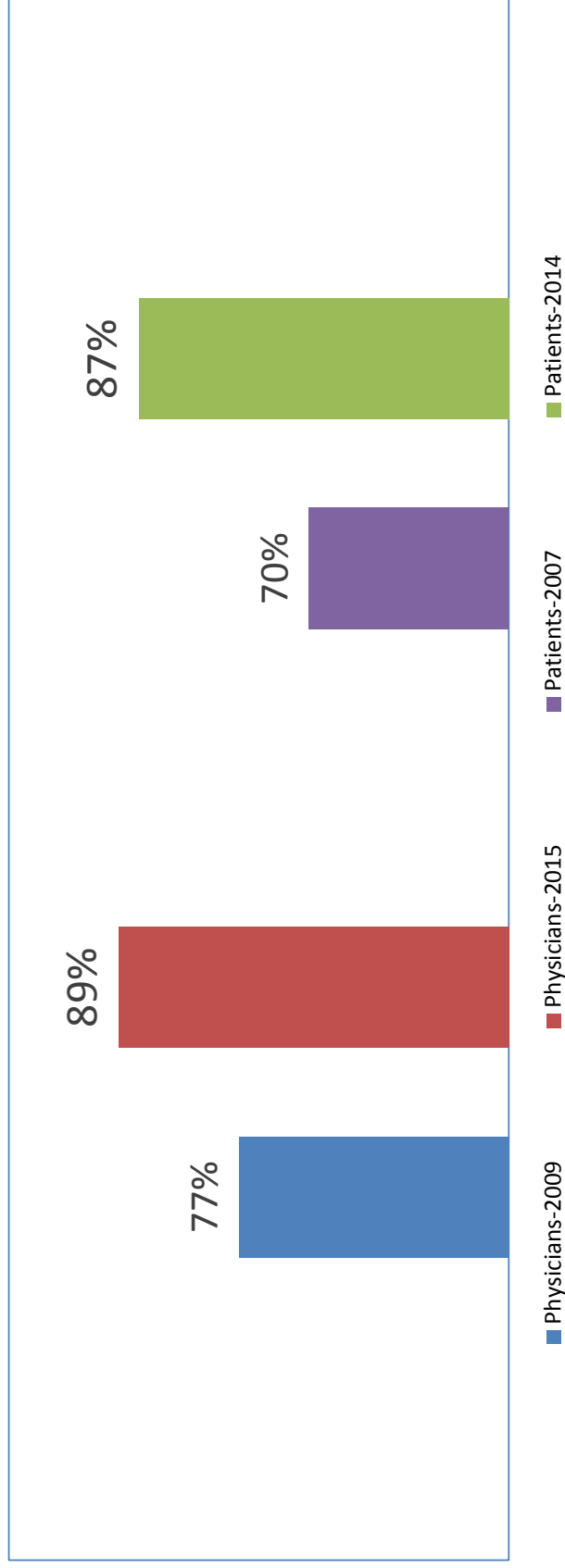
See Why

# actors affecting generic drug use

## Advertising/promotion

## Patient/physician skepticism

Generic Drugs Are As Effective as Brand-Name Drugs

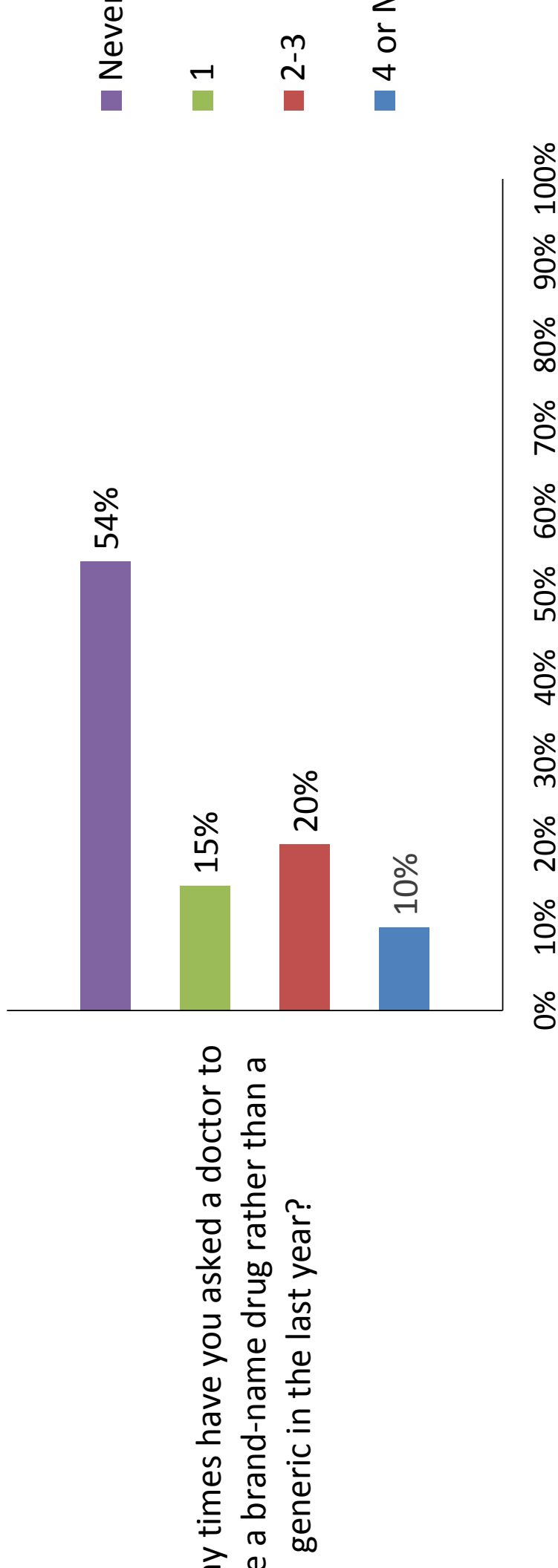


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Shrank et al., Health Aff (2009); Shrank et al., Ann Pharmacotherapy (2011); Kesselheim et al., JAMA IM (2016);  
Kesselheim et al., JGIM (2016)

# Patient Actions



**actors affecting generic drug use**

**Advertising/promotion**

**Patient/physician skepticism**

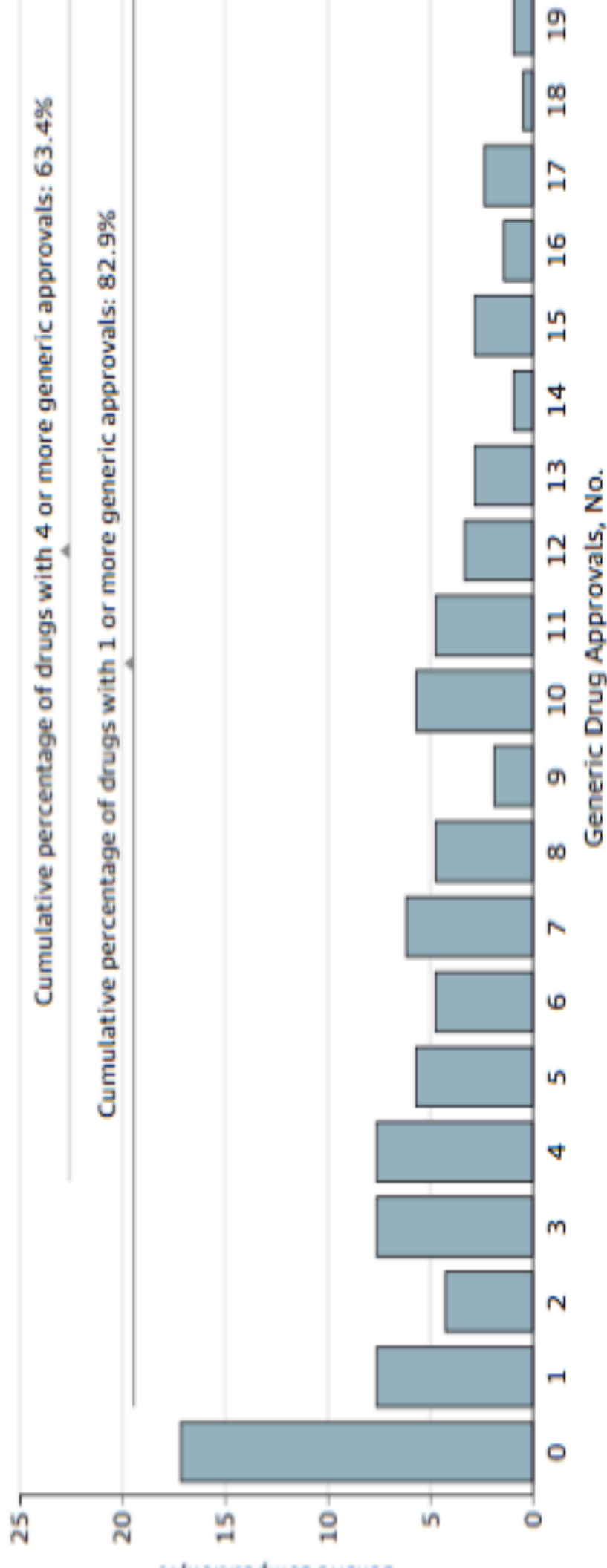
**Cost/availability**

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# Lack of vibrant competition in generic drug market

a. Generic Drug Approvals for Novel Therapeutics Approved by the US Food and Drug Administration for Generic Competition.

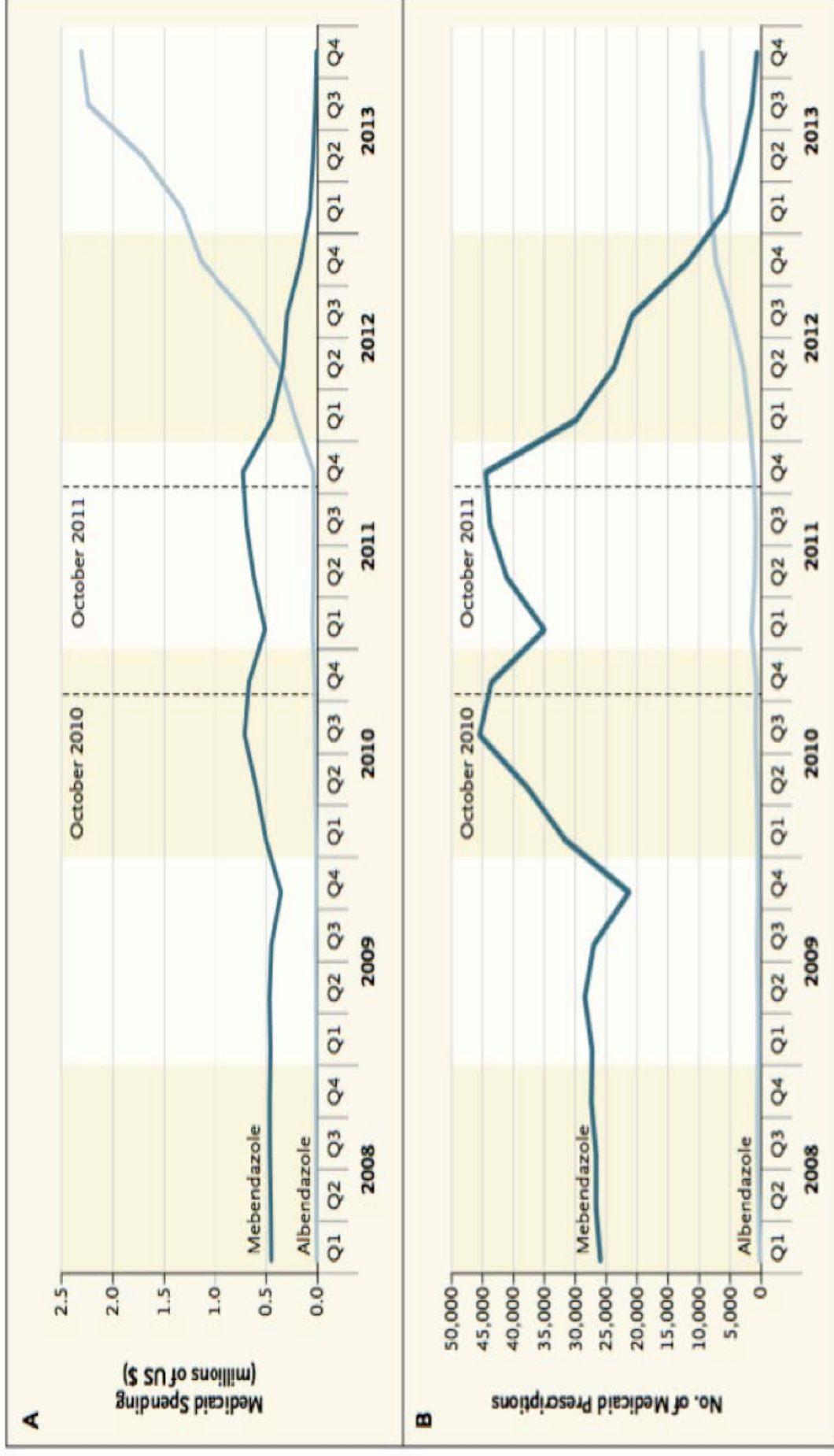


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Gupta, Kesselheim, et al., JAMA IM, 2016

# Example: Albendazole



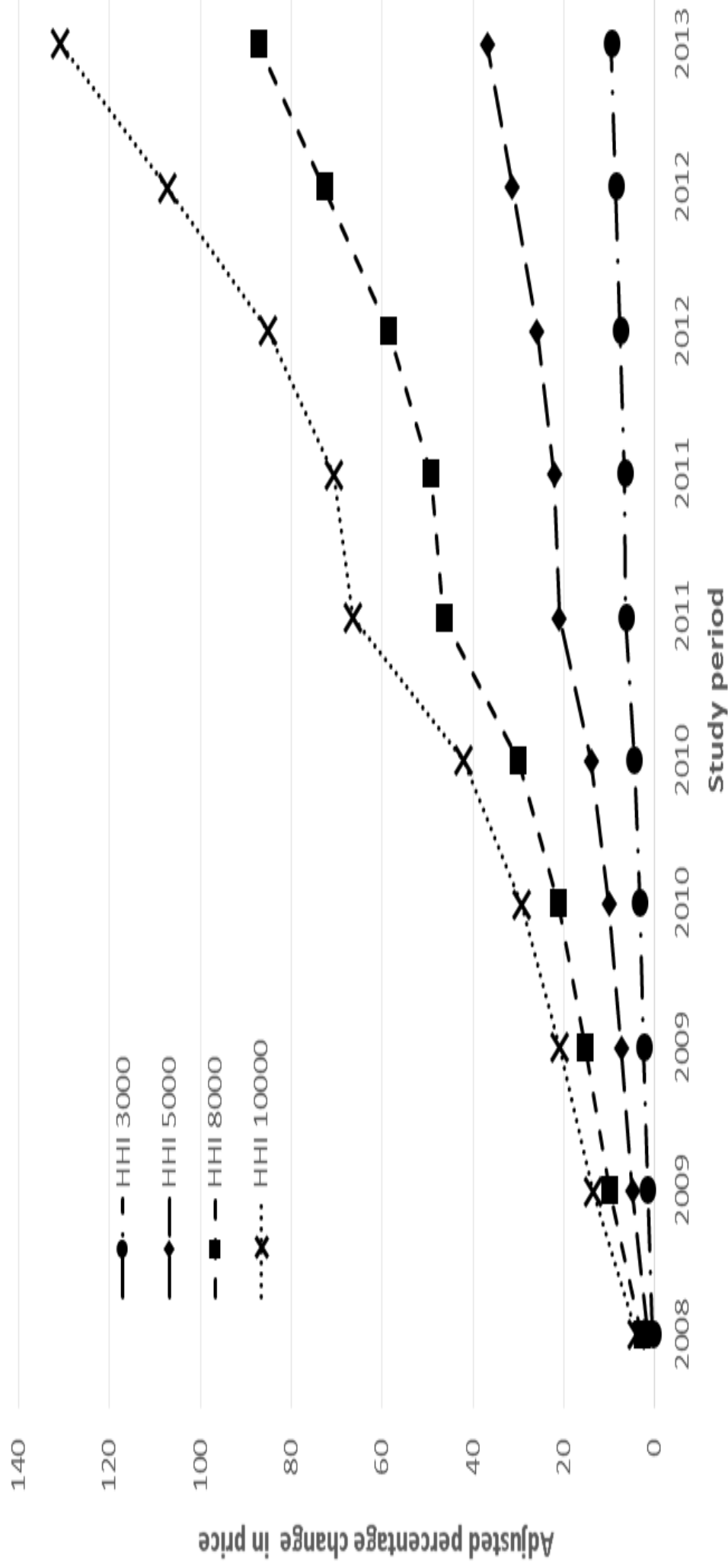
Medicaid Spending and Prescriptions for Albendazole and Mebendazole, 2008–2013.

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Alpern Stauffer Kesselheim, *NEJM*, 2015

# Association between generic market consolidation and generic price changes



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Dave Kesselheim Fox Hartzema, Annals of Internal Medicine, 2017



# Causes of insufficiently competitive generic markets

Niche patient population

Complex manufacturing process

Consolidation

Shortages

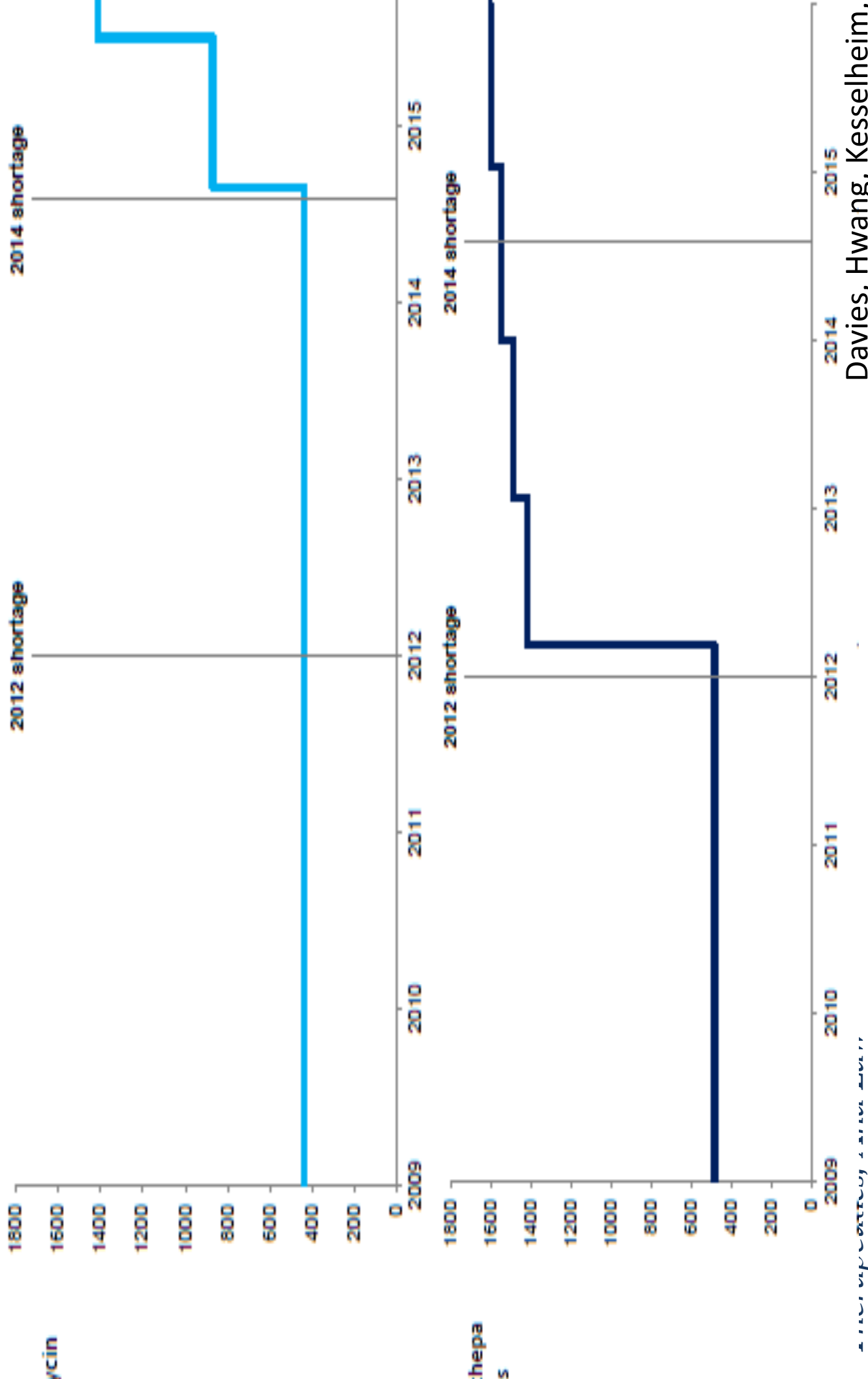
– Drug prices strongly associated with shortage risk; compared to low prices, drugs with medium and high prices had a significantly lower risk of drug shortages, OR 0.64 (95% CI, 0.48-0.86) and 0.68 (95% CI, 0.50-0.93) respectively

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Dave Pawar Fox Kesselheim, unpublished data

# Shortages contribute to high drug prices



# Solutions

Scrutiny of advertising practices

Patient/physician education

Import generics from well-regulated markets

- When price spikes are equivalent to ‘shortages’

Apply regulatory attention

- Fund generic drug science and FDA Office of Generic Drugs
- Expedite review of generic applications when three or fewer drugs in the market

Follow-on biologics

- Interchangeable (as science permits)
- Naming conventions

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Fralick, Avorn, Kesselheim, NEJM 2017; Bollyky and Kesselheim,  
2017 Brookings Institution White Paper



**Your Generics and Biosimilars Industry**

# Generic Drugs – Facing Threats to Sustainable Competition & Supply

Federal Trade Commission Workshop | November 8, 2017

# Overall U.S. Prescription Drug Market

Brands account for only

**11%** →

of prescriptions  
(500 million)

yet are

**74%**

of the cost.  
(\$333.9 billion)

Generics account for

**89%** →

of prescriptions  
(3.9 billion)

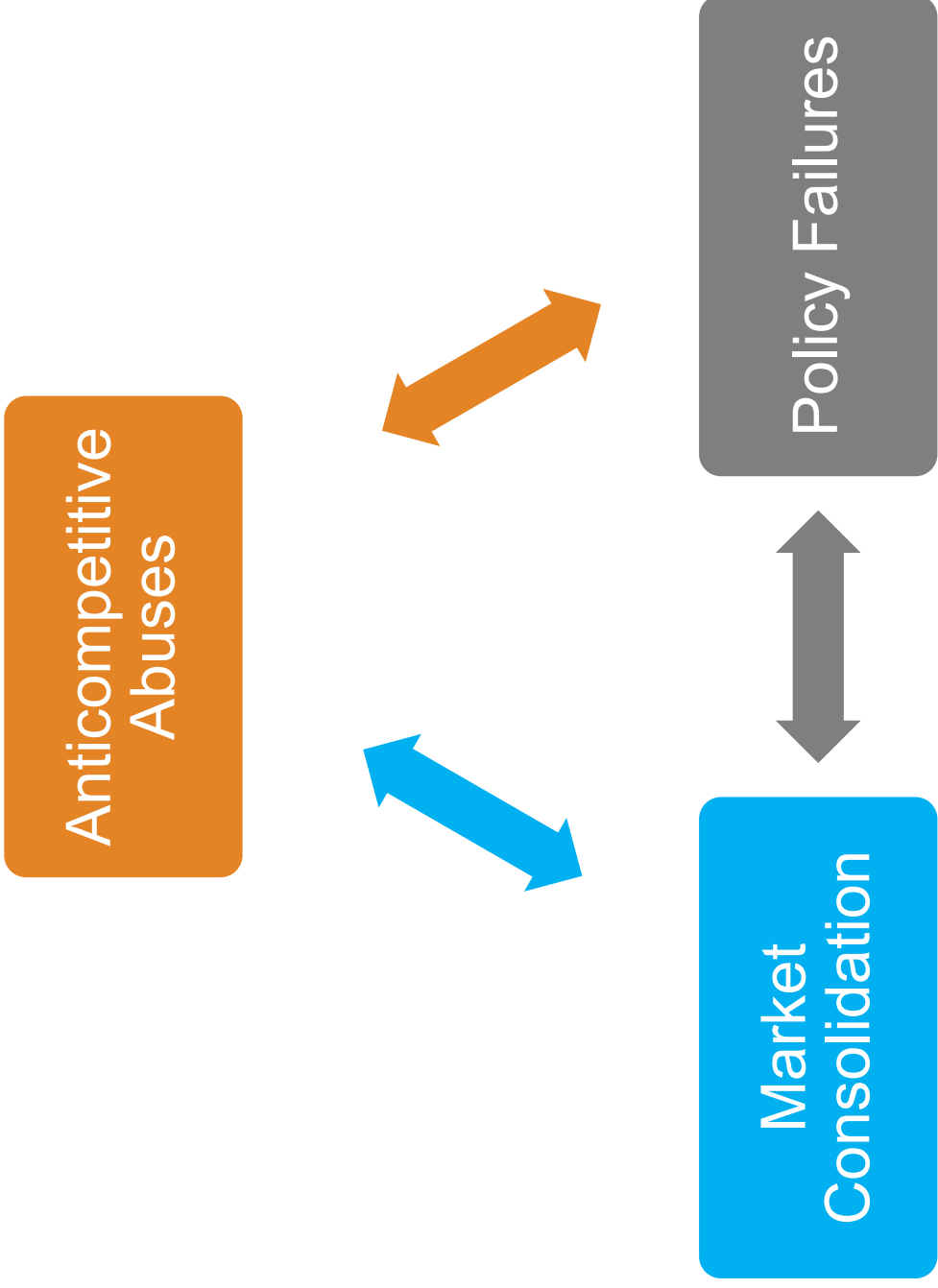
but are just

**26%**

of the cost.  
(\$116.1 billion)

Source: QuintilesIMS.

# Sustainable Generic Competition Is Threatened



# Anticompetitive Behavior Prevents Competition

We know that sometimes our regulatory rules might be ‘gamed’ in ways that may delay generic drug approvals beyond the time frame the law intended, in order to reduce competition...

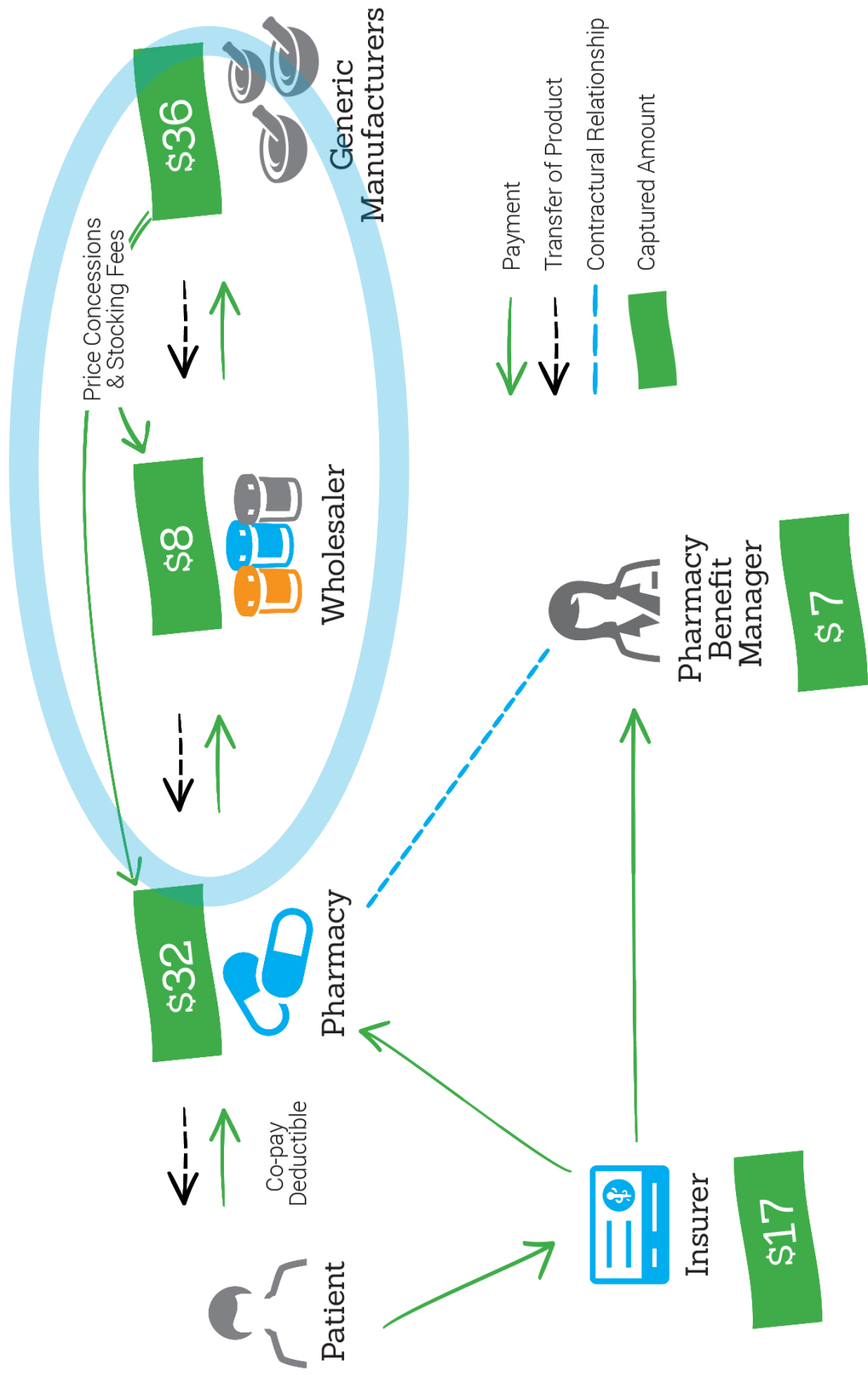
... We understand that generic sponsors are willing to buy these products at fair market value; but, in some cases, branded companies may be using regulatory strategies or commercial techniques to deliberately try to block a generic company from getting access to testing samples.”

- FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb, M.D.  
June 21, 2017

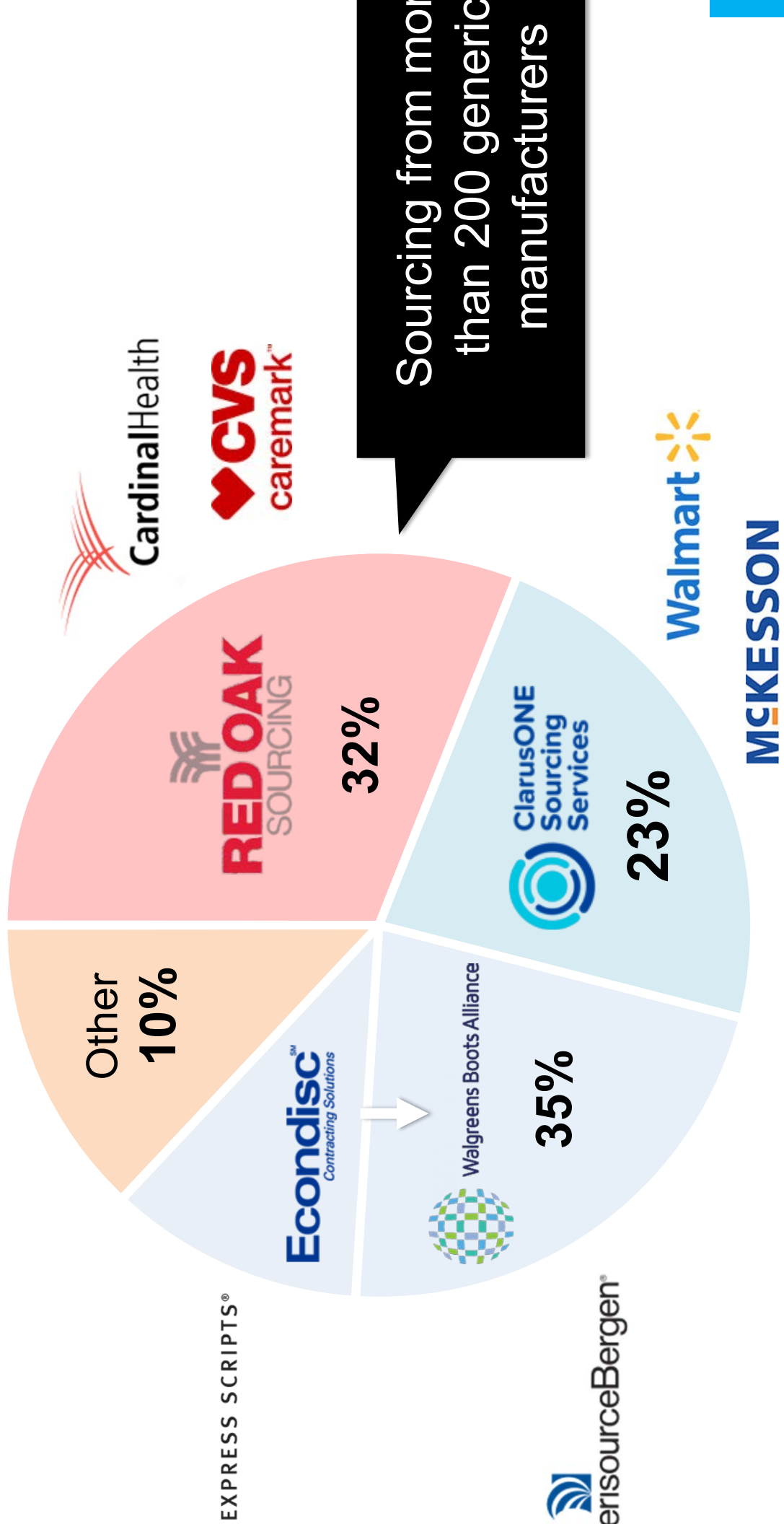
# Understanding the Generic Marketplace



# The Generic Drug Market Is Not the Brand Drug Market



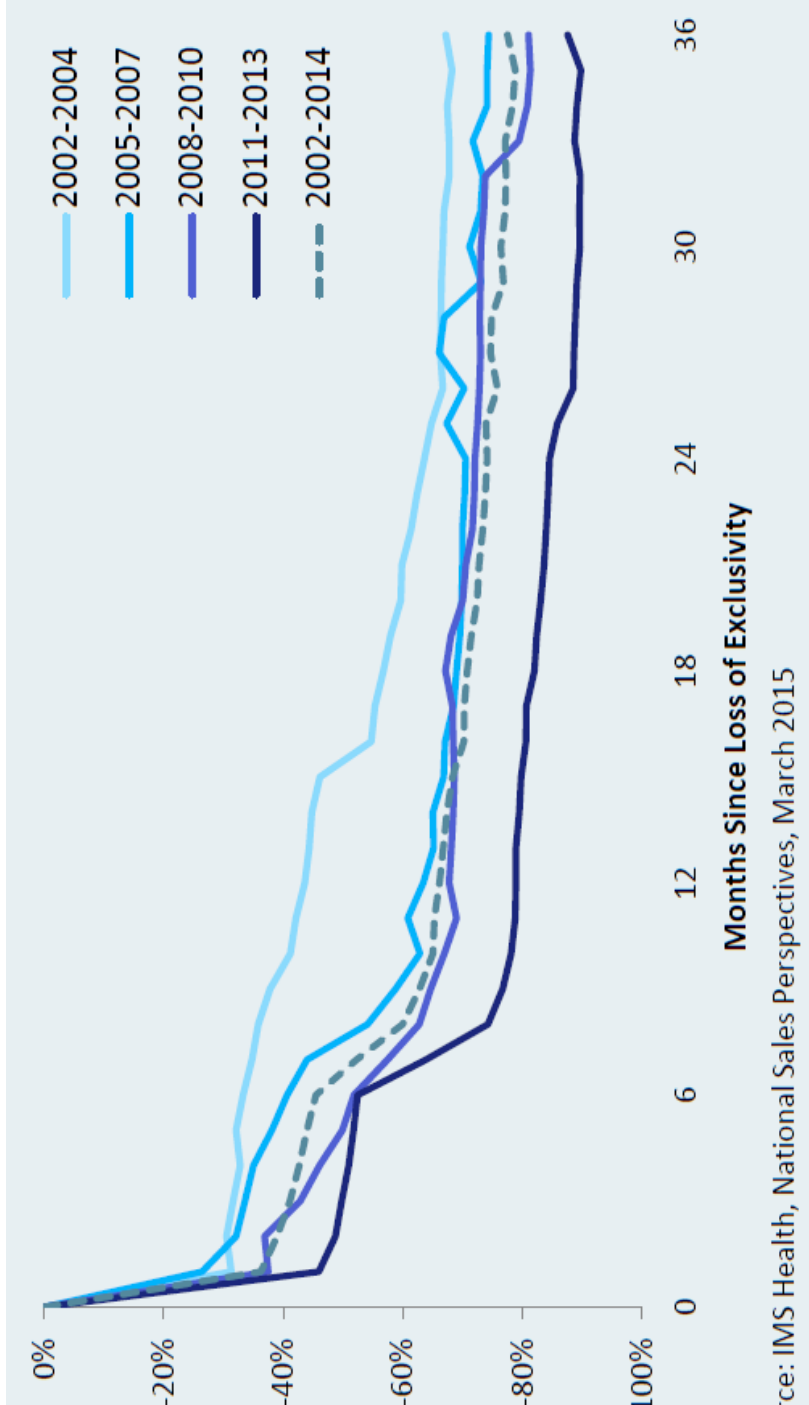
# Large Buyers Control Almost 90% of Generics



Source: Fein, Adam, "The 2017-18 Economic Report on Pharmaceutical Wholesalers and Specialty Distributors." October 2017.

# Generics Drug Prices Are Falling Further, Faster

- But the market trends – decreasing prices – are sustainable.
- In the last year, total generic prescriptions are up 2 percent but revenue is down 13 percent.
- Policies must safeguard generic market.
- Otherwise, manufacturers will be forced to exit unprofitable markets – harming patients through potential drug shortages.



# Purchasers Reinforce Deflationary Trends

We have yet to see generic deflation ease from its current high single digits (-7% to -9%) where it's been for about three quarters now.

—AmerisourceBergen CFO Tim Guttman (August 2017)

[The] challenge and headwind we faced in the last half of the year was the rate of generic deflation.

—McKesson CFO James Beer (May 2017)

We now expect full year pharma segment profit to decline to low double digits versus the prior year. This is primarily due to the previously mentioned generic market pricing.

— Cardinal CFO Michael Kaufmann (May 2017)

# Impact on Patient Access & Outcomes

# Drug Shortages Threaten Patient Outcomes

Generic drugs seem particularly susceptible to drug shortages, potentially related to existing market incentives as well as low reimbursement.

Responding to a series of drug shortages in 2011, Dr. Scott Gottlieb testified before Congress that many such shortages were a direct result of low reimbursement for older, low-margin products and that “many hospitals are being forced to ration key medicines and patients to sit on waiting lists for vital drugs.”

## The FTC and FDA Should...

Support legislative solutions to anticompetitive, regulatory gamesmanship like REMS abuse

Monitor IP abuses, in particular relating to sovereign immunity that prevent generic and biosimilar competition

Investigate whether purchaser consolidation creates anticompetitive risks

*...the continued sustainability of generic, and the promise of patient access through biosimilar, competition depends on active policy engagement.*



# Thank You

Association for Accessible Medicines





**BERNSTEIN**

November 8, 2017

# perspective on the competitive dynamics of generic drugs

## IC/FDA Joint meeting on drug competition

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See Disclosure Appendix of this report for important Disclosures and Analyst Certifications

## messages

generic value chain is broadly competitive; prices are low and are actively negotiated lower

We are getting a bit worried that there will not be sufficient profit pool to make the industry attractive for investment

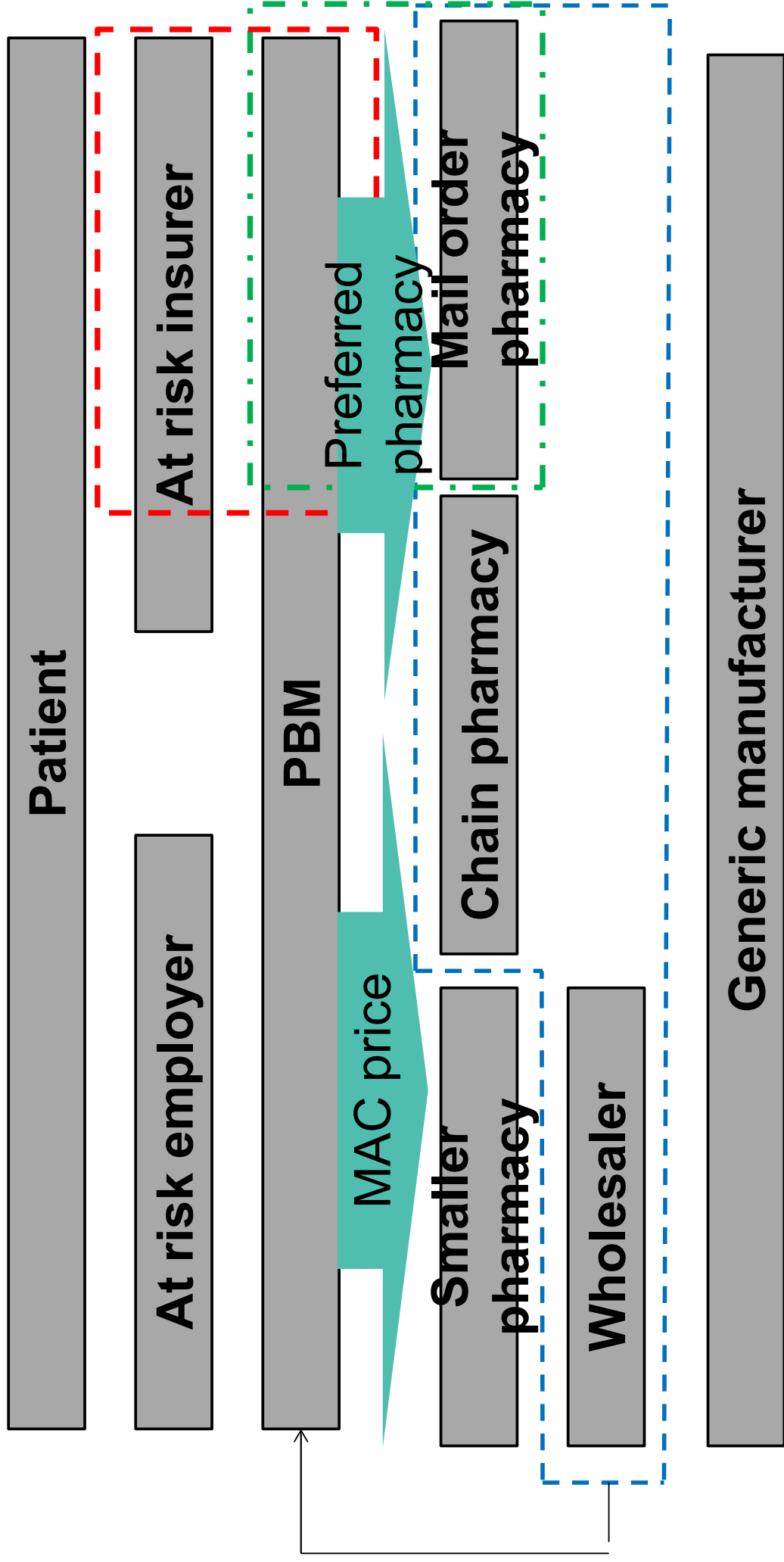
or eddy currents in the competition

competition between brand and generic in limited generic markets

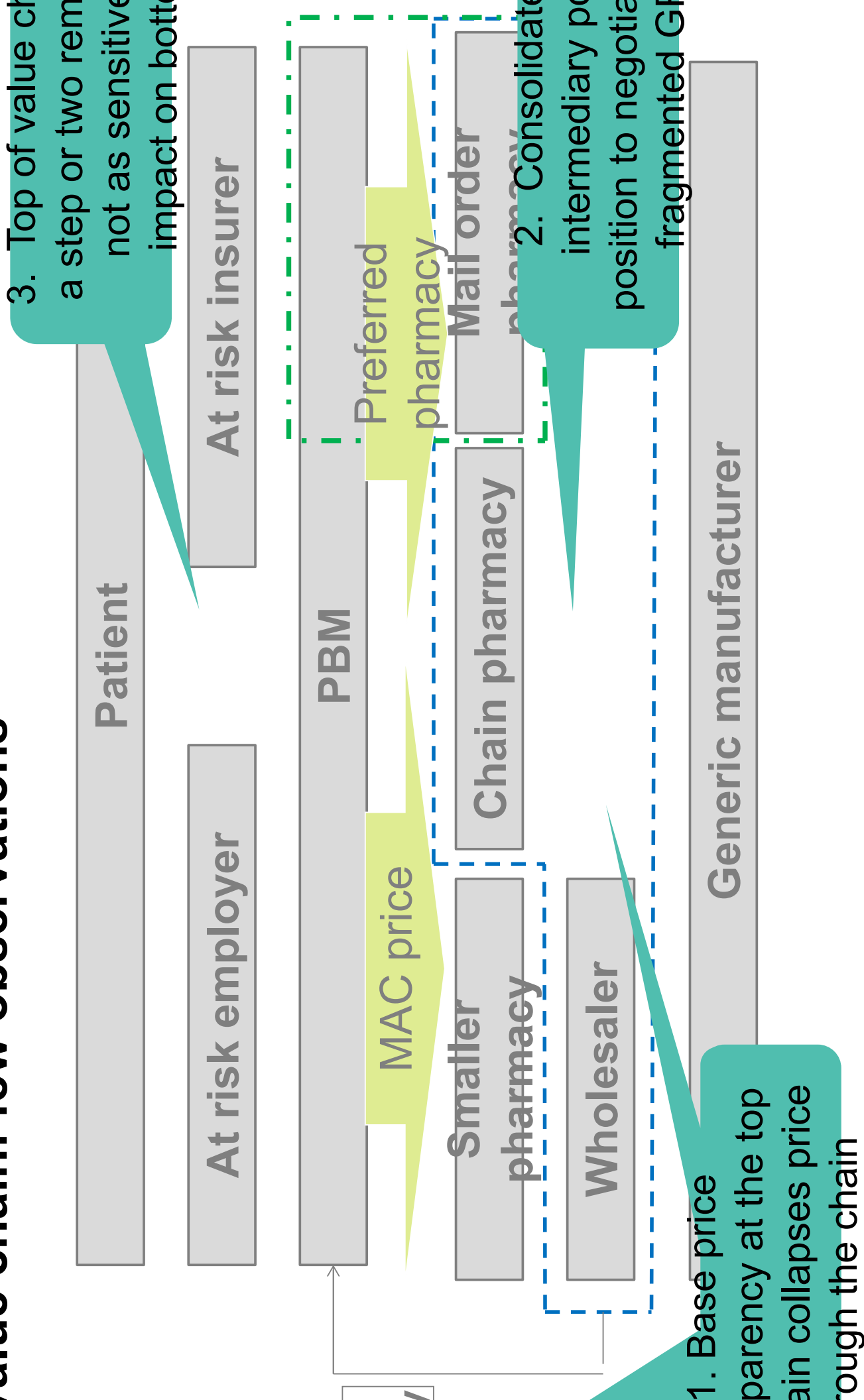
disruption of physician administered biosimilars by using the payer / provider split using FDA processes to slow generic entry

the regressive nature of the patient's generic costs

# Generic drugs: a simplistic view of the value chain



# Value chain: few observations



# It: US generic prices are broadly cheap at manufacturer level are getting cheaper; all good, but...

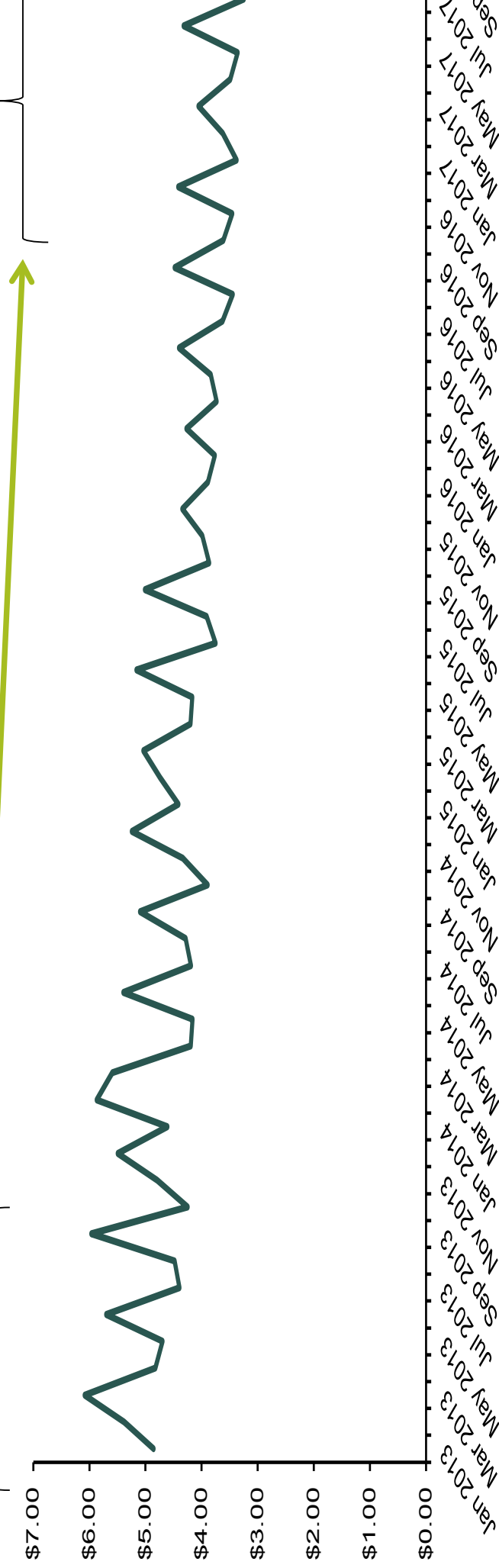
MS monthly sales / TRx)  
generic products by TRx

5.44/TRx;

Jan-Mar. 2013

3.65/TRx;  
Jul-Sep. 2017

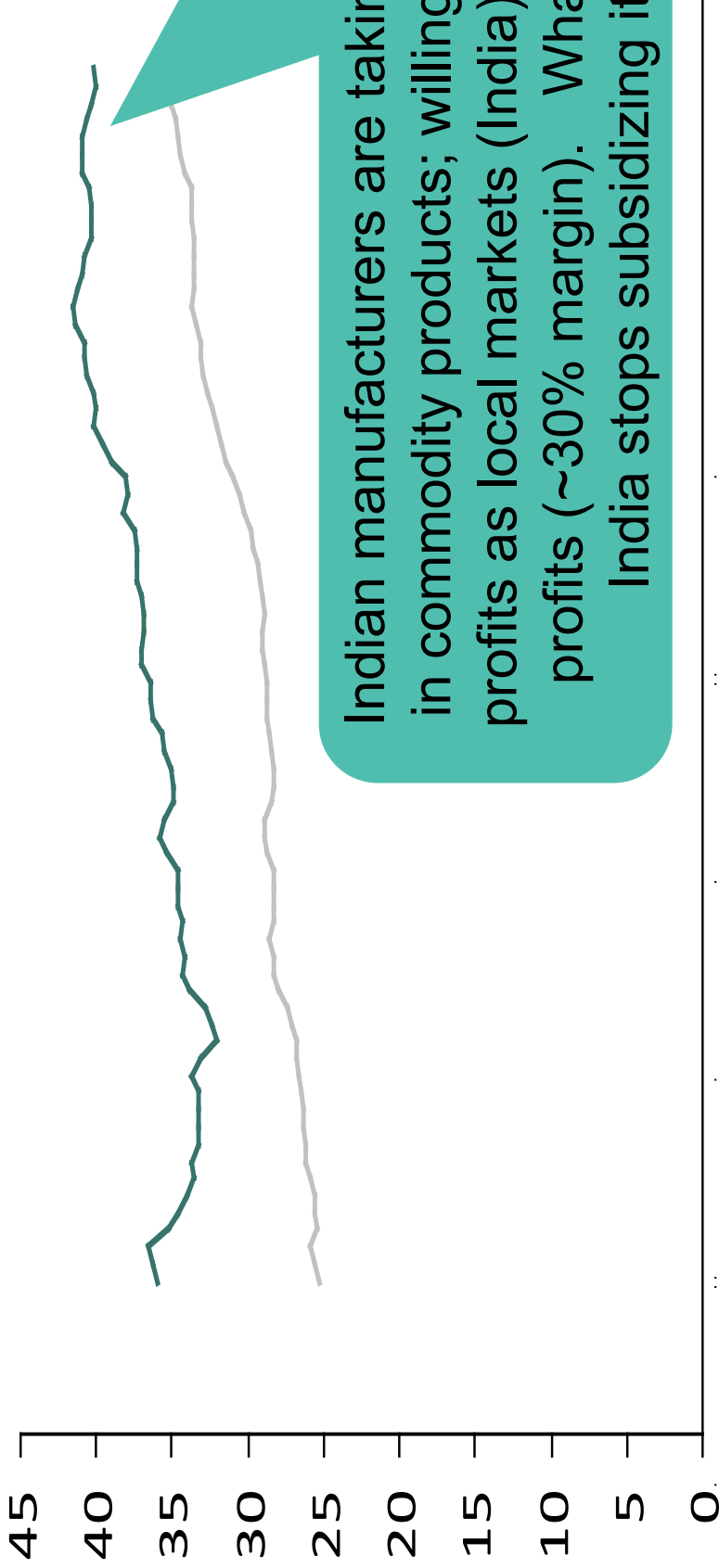
- 8.5% CAGR



ta includes top 20 US products by volume (amlodipine; atorvastatin, escitalopram; furosemid  
tin, HCT, ibuprofen, levothyroxine, Lisinopril, losartan, metformin, metoprolol, montelukast,  
ole, pantoprazole, prednisone, sertraline, simvastatin, amoxicillin)

# are gradually driving the industry off shore; becoming more ndent on economics elsewhere

Percentage of market by TRx



Indian manufacturers are taking share, not in commodity products; willing to accept lower profits as local markets (India) provides decent profits (~30% margin). What will happen if India stops subsidizing its industry?

Jan-11 Jan-12 Jan-13 Jan-14 Jan-15 Jan-16 Jan-17 Jan-18

- India share, for all generic oral solids
- India share, for top 20 generic oral solids by TRx

## **profits means less investment...**

rapy areas with higher upfront costs will see lower willingness to participate given three buyers

ready hearing of less willingness to invest in respiratory, peptides

er profit margin implies less value chain flexibility

ewer, larger facilities; lower excess manufacturing capacity

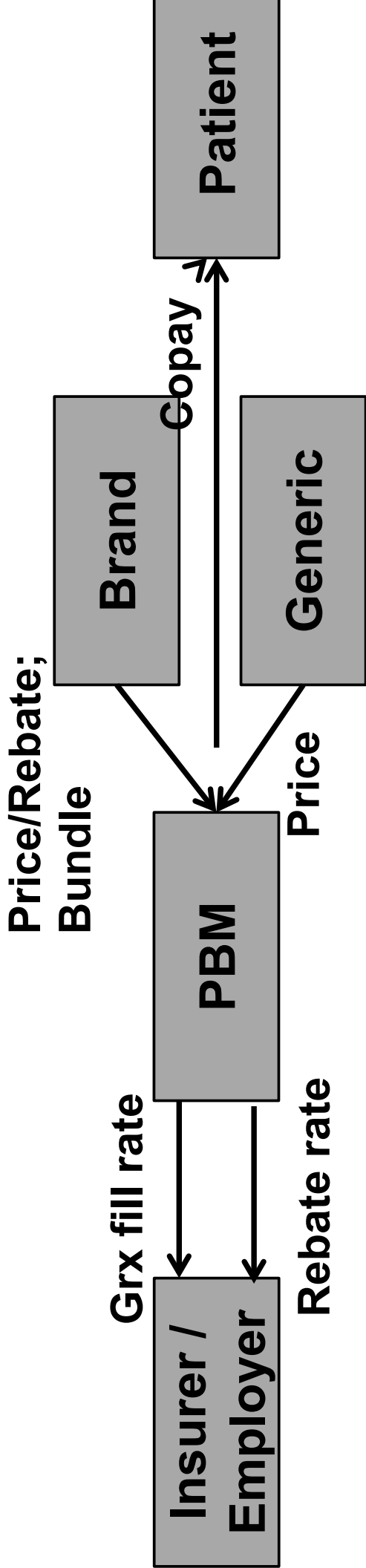
lower supply chain (defined quantities commitment)

ower ongoing Cap Ex

eterioration in expertise at local level

have seen this with generic injectables...

# Impact of rebates and generic fill rate on product choice



market with 1-2 generics, brands often compete with GRx for share  
generic competes primarily in price; brand competes with price, structured rebates  
PBM, and may have different economics than generics; brand can also bundle add  
products

most PBM contracts include targets of both GRx fill rates and branded rebate rate; I  
with very high rebate may be too attractive to give up (Adderall XR)  
high discounts off price (e.g. brands where Medicaid/340B prices are a penny) may  
preference of brand/AG over generic (e.g. Concerta)

critical question is isolating patients from copay differences when the branded prod  
preferred



# Traging the split between providers and payers in physician administered biosimilars

Physician-administered drugs have two pressure points – physician chooses product or payer can require preferring one product

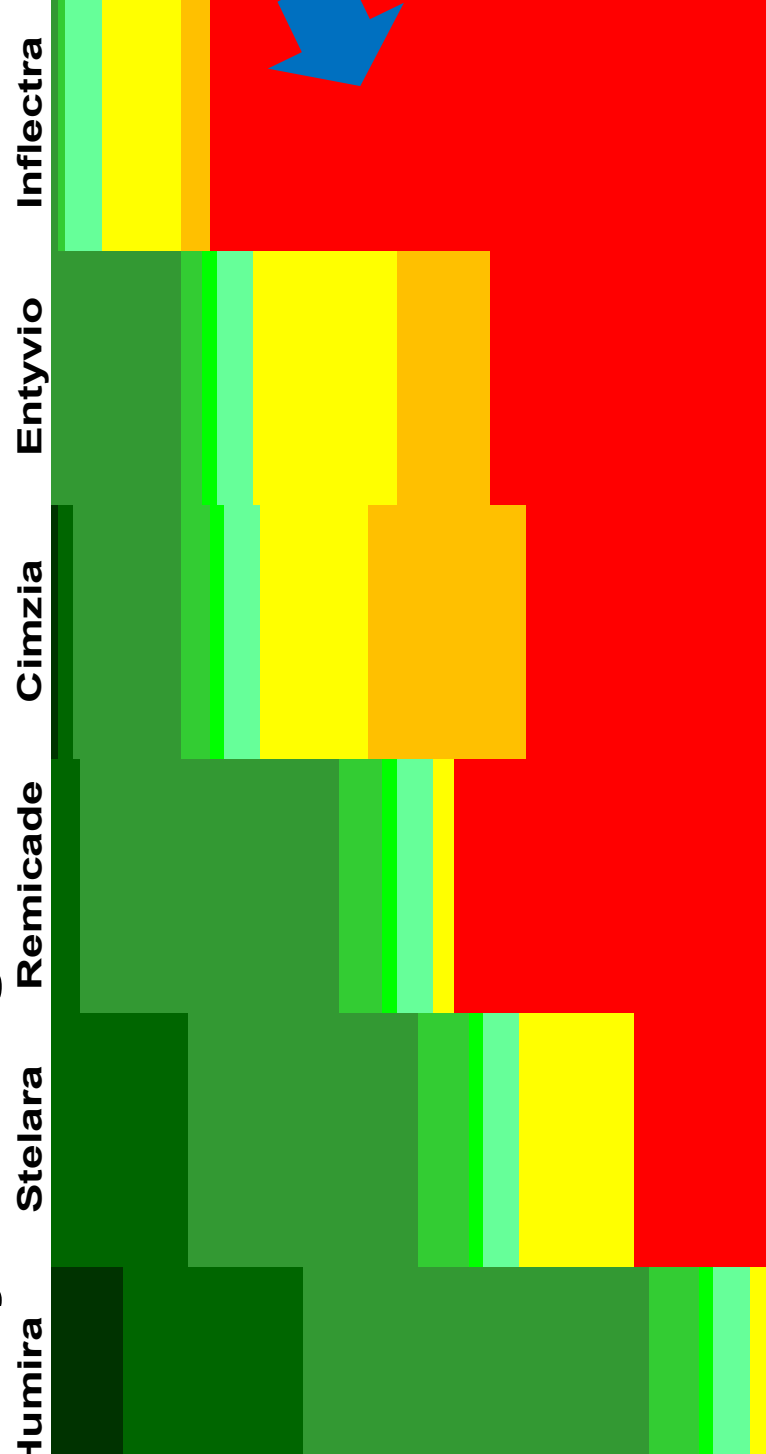
In the Remicade case, incumbent contracted exclusive position vs. the biosimilar with significant portion payers; thus every provider must stock innovator products

JNJ then gave discounts to providers across a broad portfolio of products, conditioning volume of Remicade (with an understanding of demand at each provider)

Why providers standardized on innovator; biosimilar share negligible  
Source of current lawsuit

NJ argues market chose to standardize on innovator rather than on biosimilar given clinical reliability – our view: true, but JNJ forced the decision and was there first to capture the volume

# Formulary coverage in Crohn's disease: Inflectra broadly blocked

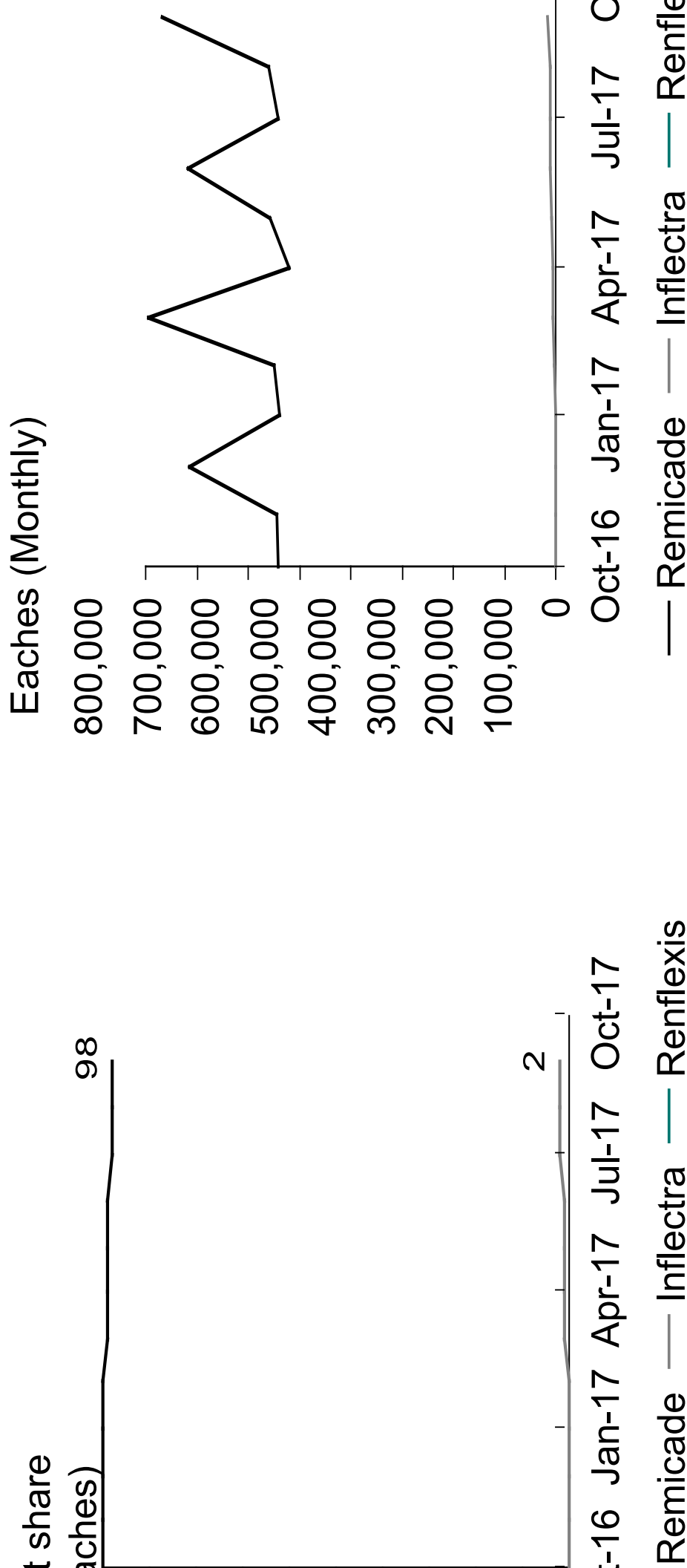


- Sole 1st position
- 1st position - 1 of 2
- 1st position - 1 of 3
- 1st position - 1 of 4
- 1st position - 1 of 5
- 1st position - 1 of 6
- 1 branded step
- 2 branded steps
- Not covered

Note: data represents formulary coverage in largest formularies responsible for 50% of US commercial coverage mid 2017; source: Bernstein analysis of formulary data

# Simab (Remicade) US market, biosimilars did not penetrate

Roche's Renflexis was launched Jul-17 and just started showing up in September IMS sales data (see below). Remicade is showing up in September IMS sales data (see below).



MS; Bernstein analysis

# Delaying FDA processes to delay GRx competition

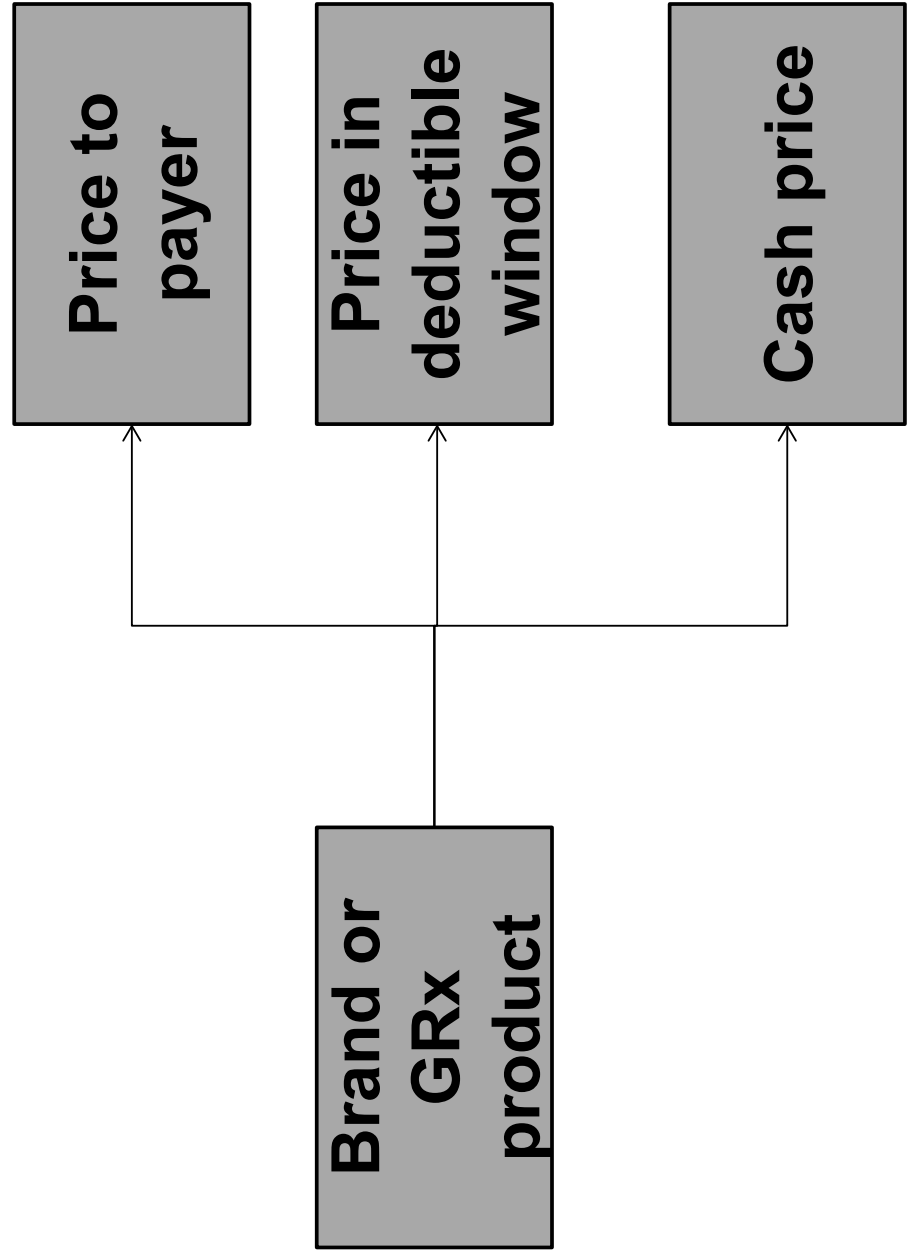
	Issue	Potential solutions
REMS	Two issues: access to reference drug (e.g. Revlimid) and participation in shared REM (e.g. Xyrem. Tracleer)	Require third party management of REMS and generic product sourcing
Citizen petitions	Multiple citizen petitions, adding information and arguments over time (e.g. Copaxone)	Require fees for CP filings, corporations and use of staff response capabilities
Delay in decision making	FDA refining requirements for approval after generic filing (e.g. Lialda)	Make generic product specific guidelines part of <u>NDA</u> process

# Generic (and brand) prices are often regressive; most exposed patient pays the highest price

Price and dispensing fees negotiated between pharmacist and PBM; patient pays deductible (~\$10) often covers most of cost

Patient pays price determined by pharmacy; with 'guardrails' provided by PBM/insurer

Patient pays full price; what market will bear



# HIGH PRICES & NO EXCUSES: 6 ANTICOMPETITIVE GAMES

MICHAEL A. CARRIER  
DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR  
RUTGERS LAW SCHOOL

## Crucial Topic

Important exercise: patents get attention; post-patent entry often does not

I have comprehensively studied patents and antitrust in pharmaceutical industry

- Co-author of leading IP/antitrust treatise
- Author of more than 100 articles (40 on pharmaceutical antitrust law)
- Author of amicus curiae briefs on behalf of hundreds of professors
- Frequently cited in media (1000+ times) and courts (including U.S. Supreme Court)

# No (or Weak) Patents Delay Generics

Brand profits from monopoly (each day = millions)

Regulatory regime used to delay entry: FDA exclusivity, reformulation time, petition process, distribution restrictions

This behavior and others also follows from patenting of secondary advances

“Off-patent” not coming as quickly as it used to as brands obtain weaker patents covering developments at active-ingredient patent expires

**Small molecule example:** Pfizer’s strongest Lipitor patents expired in March 2010 & June 2011, but settlement with generics delayed entry until after these periods because of minor patents expiring in 2016

**Biologic example:** AbbVie’s composition-of-matter patent on inflammatory-disease-treating Humira expired in 2016, but patent thicket of 100+ patents (indication/method of treatment (22), formulation (14), manufacturing (24), “other” (15)) extends protection until 2034...53 patents obtained in 2015 and 2016 alone

- *AbbVie Long-Term Strategy*, Oct. 30, 2015,

- [http://www.biotechduediligence.com/uploads/6/3/6/7/6367956/abbvie\\_strategy\\_presentation\\_1.pdf](http://www.biotechduediligence.com/uploads/6/3/6/7/6367956/abbvie_strategy_presentation_1.pdf);

- Cynthia Koons, *This Shield of Patents Protects the World’s Best-Selling Drug*, BLOOMBERG BUSINESSWEEK, Sept. 7, 2017, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-09-07/this-shield-of-patents-protects-the-world-s-best-selling-drug>.



# Game 1: Pay-for-delay Settlements

*FTC v. Actavis*: Settlements by which brands pay generics to delay entering market can have “significant anticompetitive effects” and violate antitrust law

Parties can settle without payment: 2015 FTC Report shows number of settlements (170) increasing while “pay for delay” deals fall from 40 (FY2012) to 14 (FY2015), with only 5 above \$7m litigation cost

89% of patents in settled litigation are secondary patents; brand less likely to win on these (32%) than on active-ingredient (92%) patents

- C. Scott Hemphill & Bhaven Sampat, *Drug Patents at the Supreme Court*, 339 *SCIENCE* 1386, 1387 (2013) (drug first eligible for challenges between 2000 and 2008)

Most post-*Actavis* cases cover secondary patents: Actos (method of use), AndroGel (formulation), Cephalon (particle size), Effexor (extended release), K-Dur (formulation), Lidoderm (skin application), Loestrin (contraception method), Niaspan (time release), Opana (time release), Solodyn (treatment method), Wellbutrin (extended release)

- **AndroGel**: Patent for synthetic testosterone expired in 1950s
- **Loestrin**: FDA approved active ingredients in 1970s
- **Niaspan**: Active ingredient niacin sold since early 20<sup>th</sup> century

## Game 2: Product Hopping

Brand firms often switch to new versions of drug products; many switches not connected to generic entry. But some changes, with patient migration to reformulated product, have one purpose: **delay generics**

- Prevent operation of state substitution laws and Hatch-Waxman Act
- Aim to switch market to reformulated version before generic of original version enters market
- Each switch results in delay from generic reformulation, FDA approval, patent litigation

**Secondary patents** give extra protection: Prilosec to Nexium = 13 years; Suboxone tablet to film = 14 years; Namenda IR to XR = 14 years

Even if **no patent**, delay from FDA exclusivity and time it takes to reformulate drug

- Warner Chilcott engaged in multiple hops on acne-treating Doryx (first available in 1985 as unpatented capsule): (1) capsule to 75- and 100-mg tablets, (2) 150-mg single-scored tablet, (3) 75- and 100-mg single-scored tablets, (4) 150-mg dual-scored tablet
- Also stopped selling capsules, removed capsules from website, worked with retailers to auto-reference tablet in filling prescriptions, informed purchasers and doctors that capsules replaced by tablets, bought back and destroyed capsules

## Game 3: Citizen Petitions

Citizen petitions are meant to raise legitimate safety concerns with FDA

But my empirical study of all petitions filed between 2011 and 2015 against pending generics (“505(q)” petitions) found that FDA denies 92%; also 98% of late-filed petitions (within 6 months of expiration of patent or FDA exclusivity), 100% of simultaneous petitions (when FDA resolves petition on same day it approves generic)

- Michael A. Carrier & Carl J. Minniti III, *Citizen Petitions: Long, Late-Filed, and At-Last Denied*, 66 AMERICAN UNIVERSITY LAW REVIEW 305 (2016)

**Last-minute petition example:** Bayer’s petition on IUD Mirena 1 day before patent expiration

**Bottleneck example:** Allergan’s dry-eye-treating Restasis petitions delay generics

- Feb. 2014 petition denied Nov. 2014; Dec. 2014 petition denied Feb. 2016; Aug. 2017 petition filed
  - Each petition challenges generics’ use of in vitro (as opposed to human) testing protocols
- In 135-page opinion, Judge Bryson invalidated 6 Restasis patents, but generics Mylan, Teva, Akorn still cannot enter market because of Aug. 2017 petition

## Game 4: REMS Restrictions

REMS serve important purpose in making sure risky drugs reach market

But brands have used REMS to deny samples generics need for bioequivalence testing

- 2017 study: REMS restricts 41 drugs with sales exceeding \$1.1 billion
  - Alex Brill, *REMS and Restricted Distribution Programs*, June 2017, [https://www.gphaonline.org/media/cms/Alex\\_Brill\\_REMS\\_Study\\_June\\_2017.pdf](https://www.gphaonline.org/media/cms/Alex_Brill_REMS_Study_June_2017.pdf)
- More than 150 generics have informed FDA they cannot obtain samples

In litigated cases, brands have **denied samples** to generics willing to pay market prices and enter into indemnification agreements

- And brands have ignored FDA letters showing REMS compliance and protections
  - E.g.: 1) Actelion “would sell” sample upon receiving FDA letter but 2) after Apotex provides FDA letter, Actelion responds: “This changes nothing” and “you don’t get [the sample]”

Brands also have not negotiated in good faith for **shared REMS** programs

- E.g.: Suboxone allegedly turned down invitations to participate in meetings, insisted on unfavorable conditions, refused to share nonpublic information, demanded veto authority and supermajority vote, engaged in delay tactics
  - See Michael A. Carrier, *Sharing, Samples, and Generics: An Antitrust Framework*, CORNELL LAW REVIEW, at 37-42 (forthcoming 2017), [https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=2979565](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2979565))

# Game 5: Non-REMS Distribution Restrictions

Some companies have imposed distribution restrictions not required by FDA

2017 study: Non-REMS programs restrict 33 drugs with sales exceeding \$11 billion

- Alex Brill, *REMS and Restricted Distribution Programs*, June 2017, [https://www.gphaonline.org/media/cms/Alex\\_Brill\\_REMS\\_Study\\_June\\_2017.pdf](https://www.gphaonline.org/media/cms/Alex_Brill_REMS_Study_June_2017.pdf)

Martin Shkreli (aka “Pharma Bro”) switched Turing’s distribution system for infection-treating **Daraprim** from nationwide to single source: Walgreen’s Specialty Pharmacy

- Active ingredient introduced in 1953; distribution limited 62 years later for no safety-related reason
- Turing official: “would like to do our best to avoid generic competition”; “certainly not going to make it easier” for generics
- 5000% price increase (\$13.50 to \$750)

Retrophin (Shkreli’s prior company) also switched to closed distribution, blocking generic access on cholesterol-deficiency-treating **Chenodal** (400% increase) and kidney-stone-treating **Thiola** (1900% increase)

- Shkreli: “We do not sell Retrophin products to generic companies. . . . The whole model that generics rely upon is turned upside down with specialty pharmacy distribution”

## Game 6: Bundling/Rebates

**Restasis**: Shire sued Allergan for blocking access to dry-eye-disease-treating Xiidra

- Xiidra can be prescribed to “much larger population” and lacks Restasis’s side effects but limited to 10% Medicare Part D market (vs 35% commercial market)
- Challenge bundling and exclusive dealing (if include Xiidra on formularies, lose substantial discounts/rebates on other Allergan drugs)
  - Even if plan received Xiidra for free, “the numbers still wouldn’t work”

**Remicade**: J&J had only product on market 1998-2016; Pfizer sued, claiming J&J blocked access to arthritis- and Crohn’s-treating rival Inflectra

- Insurers cannot cover Inflectra; otherwise J&J deny rebates (which apply to multiple products)
- Inflectra has less than 4% of market; J&J raise Remicade list price 9%

**EpiPen**: Sanofi sued Mylan for offering high (“practically impossible to refuse”) rebates to insurers, PBMs, and state Medicaid programs; had effect of blocking coverage of rival Auvi-Q

- Auvi-Q market share fell roughly 50% after rebates took effect

**Exclusive dealing law**: Percentage of market foreclosed important. Also: contract duration, industry prevalence, entry barriers, distribution alternatives

**Rebate law**: Exclusionary effect on competitors (3<sup>rd</sup> Cir.) vs. attribution test (attribute discount to product on which plaintiff claims exclusion and see if price below cost) (9<sup>th</sup> Cir.)

# Proposals

**Antitrust enforcement:** Careful scrutiny of thickets and conduct accompanying secondary patents

**Settlements:** Continued judicial scrutiny and FTC enforcement; consideration of legislation applying presumptive illegality or expanded 180-day exclusivity period

**Product hopping:** Scrutiny of reformulations that cannibalize profitable drugs, making no economic sense other than by stifling generic entry (can apply to **hard** and soft switches)

- See Michael A. Carrier & Steve Shadowen, *Product Hopping: A New Framework*, 92 NOTRE DAME LAW REVIEW 167 (2016)

**REMS:** Antitrust scrutiny for sample denials and delayed negotiations on shared REMS

- See Michael A. Carrier, *Sharing, Samples, and Generics: An Antitrust Framework*, CORNELL LAW REVIEW (forthcoming 2017), [https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=2979565](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2979565))
- CREATES Act would provide bipartisan statutory fix for sample denials and blocked negotiations

**Non-REMS distribution restrictions:** Rigorous antitrust scrutiny (apply no-economic-sense test)

**Citizen petitions:** Antitrust scrutiny and enforcement (like FTC case against Shire ViroPharma)

- Also consider: (1) list of 505(q) petitions and delay in annual reports to Congress; (2) determine if simultaneous generic approvals and petition resolutions caused delay; (3) make easier for FDA to summarize dispose of petitions; (4) determine money and time incurred resolving petitions; (5) certify objections filed within one year

- See Michael A. Carrier, *Five Actions to Stop Citizen Petition Abuse*, 118 COLUMBIA LAW REVIEW ONLINE \_\_\_\_ (forthcoming 2018), [https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=3043541](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3043541)

**Bundling/rebates:** Robust antitrust scrutiny of exclusive dealing and bundling

# **Generic Drug Competition:** *Understanding Demand, Price & Supply* *Market Failures, Fixes & the Future*

Understanding Competition in Prescription Drug Markets:  
Entry & Supply Chain Dynamics

**The Federal Trade Commission**  
Office of Policy and Planning

Washington, D.C.  
November 8, 2017

**Stephen W. Schondelmeyer**  
Professor and Director  
**PRIME Institute**  
*University of Minnesota*





# Overview

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## *Understanding the Generic Pharmaceutical Market*

- ◆ Demand for Generic Drugs
- ◆ Supply of Generic Drugs
- ◆ Competition & Market Power for Generics
- ◆ Regulatory & Legal Influences on Generics
- ◆ Generic Drug Price Trends
- ◆ Finding Fixes for the Future

# **Demand for Generics**

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**The Generic Drug Market is NOT a Single Market  
A Series of Individual Markets Defined By:**

**Therapeutic Class, Drug Molecule, Dose Form &/or Strength**  
**Patient Demand for Generics is Market Specific**

- **Diabetic Cannot Use Lower Cost Epileptic Drug to Treat Diabetes**

**Measures of Market Concentration by Ther. Class**  
**Economic Substitution vs Generic Substitution**  
**Payer Demand Drives Low Cost Generics to 90%**

# Supply of Generic Drug

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## Fewer Generic Firms & Industry Consolidation

- Teva acquired Actavis; Teva acquired Allergan; Teva acquired Anda

## Most Generic Firms Have Broad Line of Products

## Most Brand Name Firms Have Generic Divisions

- Pfizer → Greystone & Hospira; Novartis → Sandoz; Teva → Allergan.

## Authorized Generics Not Really Generics

- NDA-authorized, not ANDA; Pre-empt & may dampen “true” generic entry

## Bundling & Tying Arrangements in Contracts

- e.g., Must buy firm’s generics to access firm’s discounts & rebates on branded

## PBMs Sometimes Add “Spread” Onto Generic

- Generic spread for mail, specialty, preferred networks, may be higher than
- Some PBMs charge full copay even when actual generic prescription cost

# Competition & Market Power for Generics

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# of ANDAs Not Good Measure of Competition

- Unused ANDAs;

Only 1 or 2 ANDAs in Market → Pricing Power

API Contracts Can Limit/Manipulate Competition

- Lorazepam & Mylan in early 2000s → exclusive dealing with API & price increase
- What's up with atenolol shortage?

Some Generics Have Faced Over-Competition

- GPOs have driven some generic injectable prices so low firms exit the market
- Infrastructure for sterile injectables not keeping up → recalls & shortages

Some Generic Markets Too Small to be Profitable

- Usual incentives (i.e., exclusivity) will not increase competition when market too small

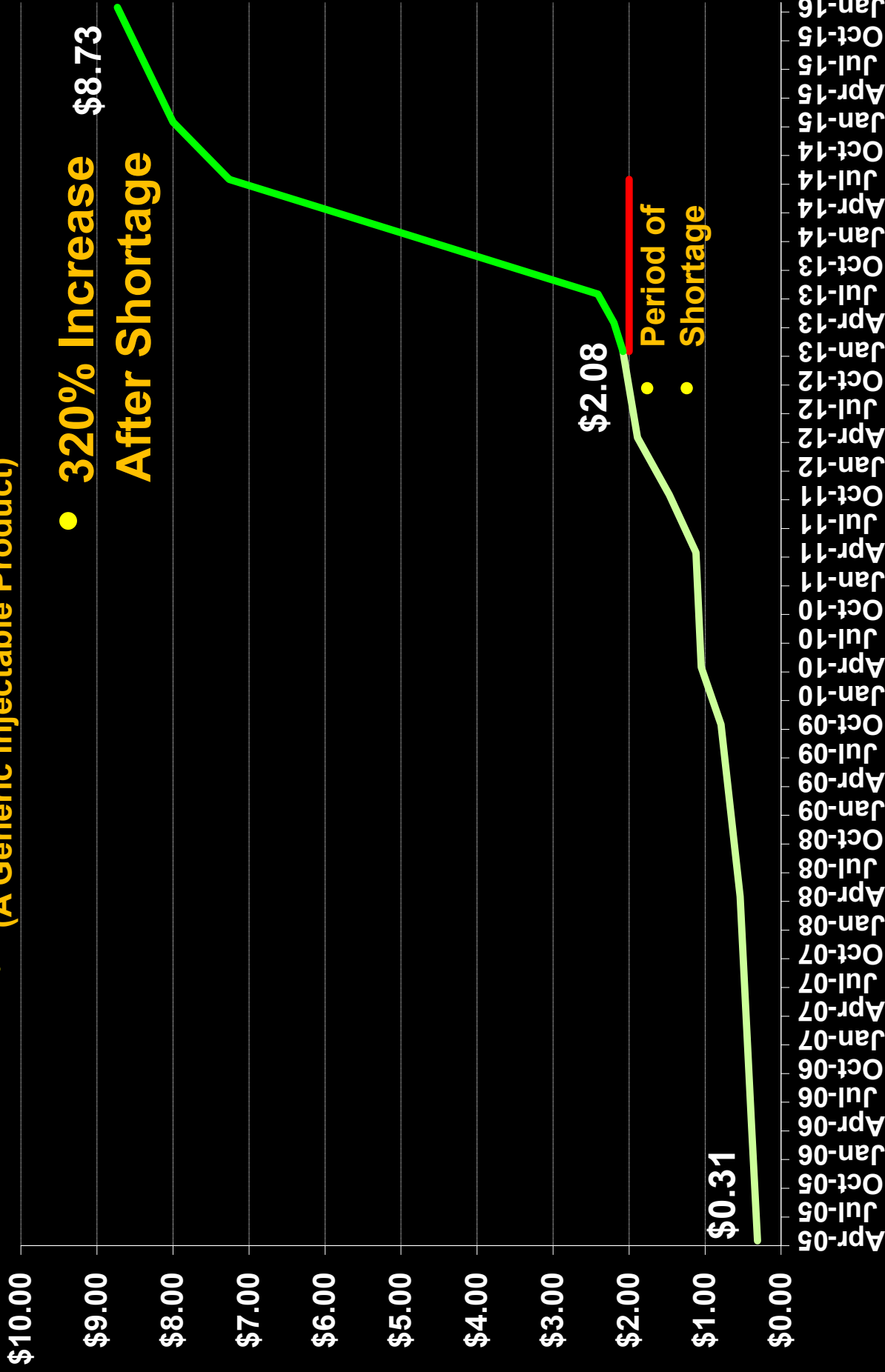
FTC Should Evaluate Shortages for Business Realities

# Verapamil Injection (Hospira)

## Impact of a Drug Shortage: April 2013 to Jan. 2015

- (A Generic Injectable Product)

\$ / Unit



Based on data found in Truven's MarketScan® Commercial Claims and Encounter and Medicare Supplemental Data, 2005-2016 and other sources and compiled by PRIME Institute, University of Minnesota.

# Regulatory & Legal Influences on Generics

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## FDA Review Time for ANDAs Getting Better

- Has been a rate-limiting step for ANDA approval & has limited competition

## Make Sure the 'Total Time' to Market Is Managed

- Should not just shift ANDA review time from FDAs clock to firm's clock.

## Unapproved Drugs Initiative → Competition Work

- Colchicine (Colcrys) reduced competitors and ↑ price from \$.09 to \$4.85
- Multiple unapproved drugs → 1 high-priced brand instead of more competitors
- Cost Medicare about \$1.2 billion from 2011-2015 (total national effect ~\$3.7 billion)

## Pay-for-Delay Invites Gaming & Delayed Competition

## Authorized Generics Confuse Consumers

## Trade Agreements Expand IP & Limit Generic Competition

- TPP would have taken length of biologics exclusivity out of Congress' hands

# Generic Drug Price Trends

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## Generic Prices Go Down, But Not Always

- All but 1 of Top 399 generics had a price increase between 2011 & 2015.
- 1 in 4 Old Generics Had  $\geq 100\%$  Price  $\uparrow$  in Last 5 Y
- 2 in 3 Old Generics Had  $> 25\%$  Price  $\uparrow$  in Last 5 Ye
- These were one time price increases, not cumulative increases

## Brand:Generic Price Gap $\uparrow$ from 3:1 to ~ 10:1

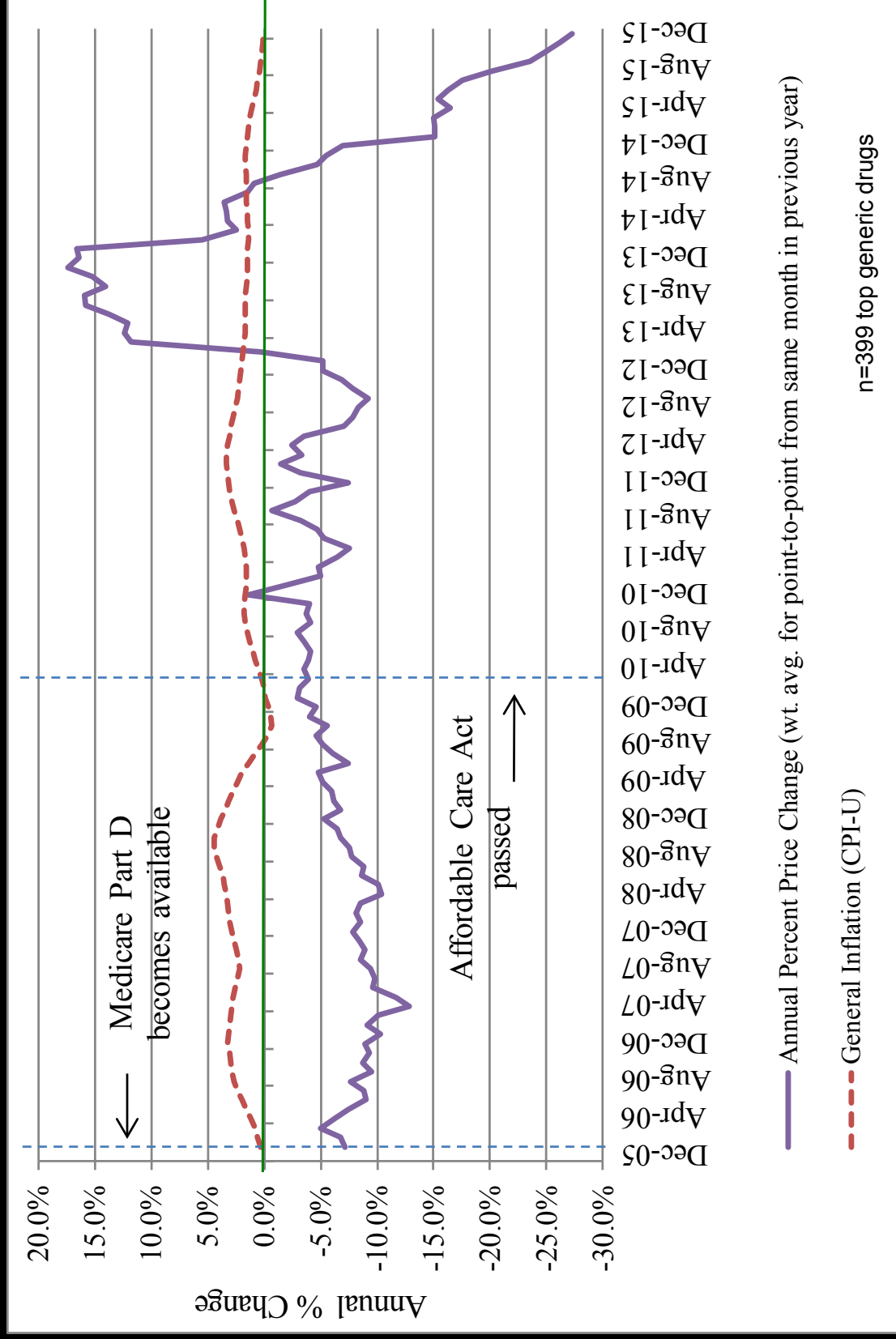
- Generics have doubled in price (\$20/Rx to \$40/Rx), brands have  $\uparrow$

## Older Generics Raise Prices to Keep Up (\$0.50 $\uparrow$ to \$

## New Generics Enter at Much Higher Price (>\$5/day

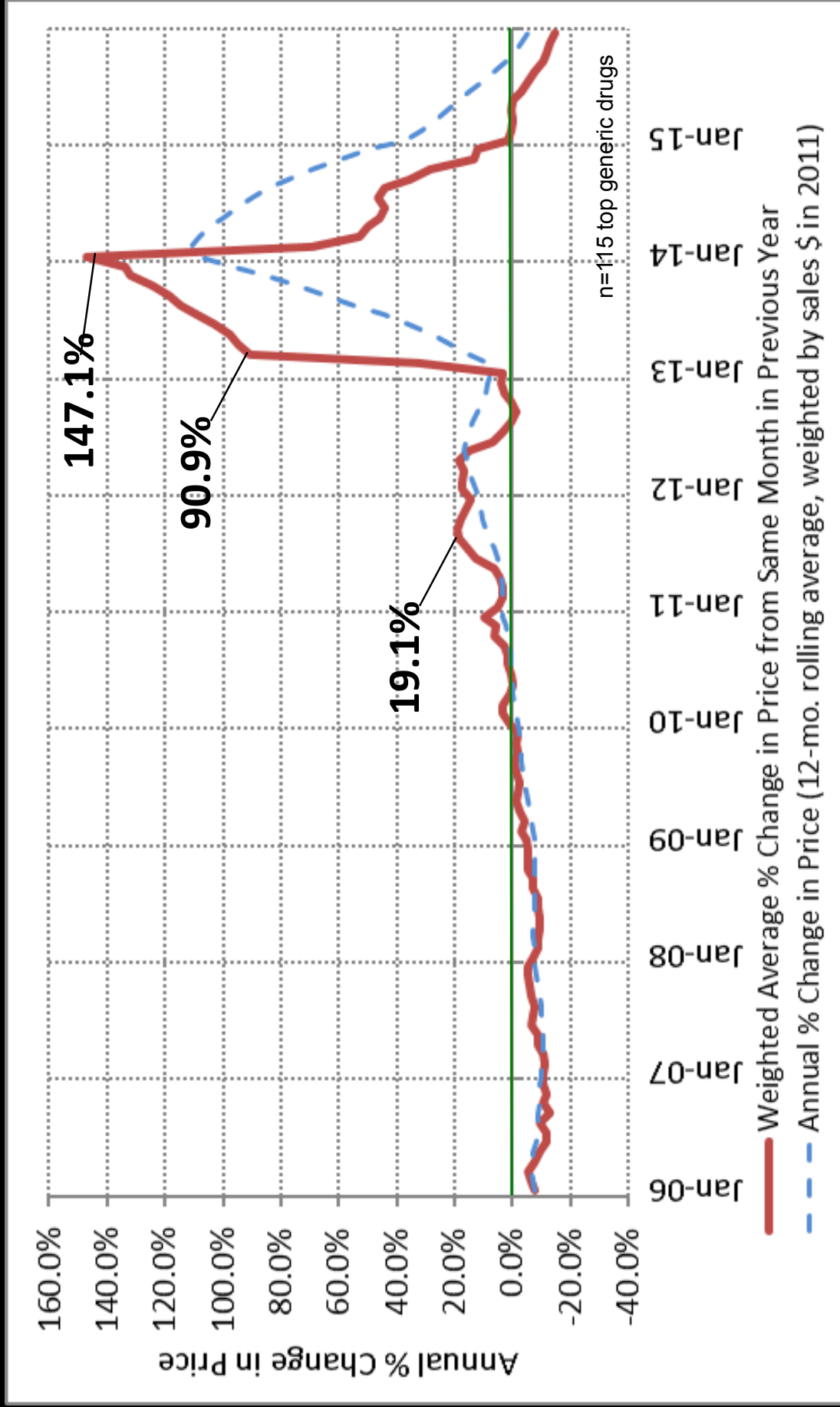
- Ondansetron (8 mg tabs) entered at \$85/day (2007)
- Enoxaparin injection entered at \$98/day (2011)

# Weighted Average Annual % Change in Retail Prices Paid for Most Widely Used Generic Prescription Drugs: 2006 to 2015

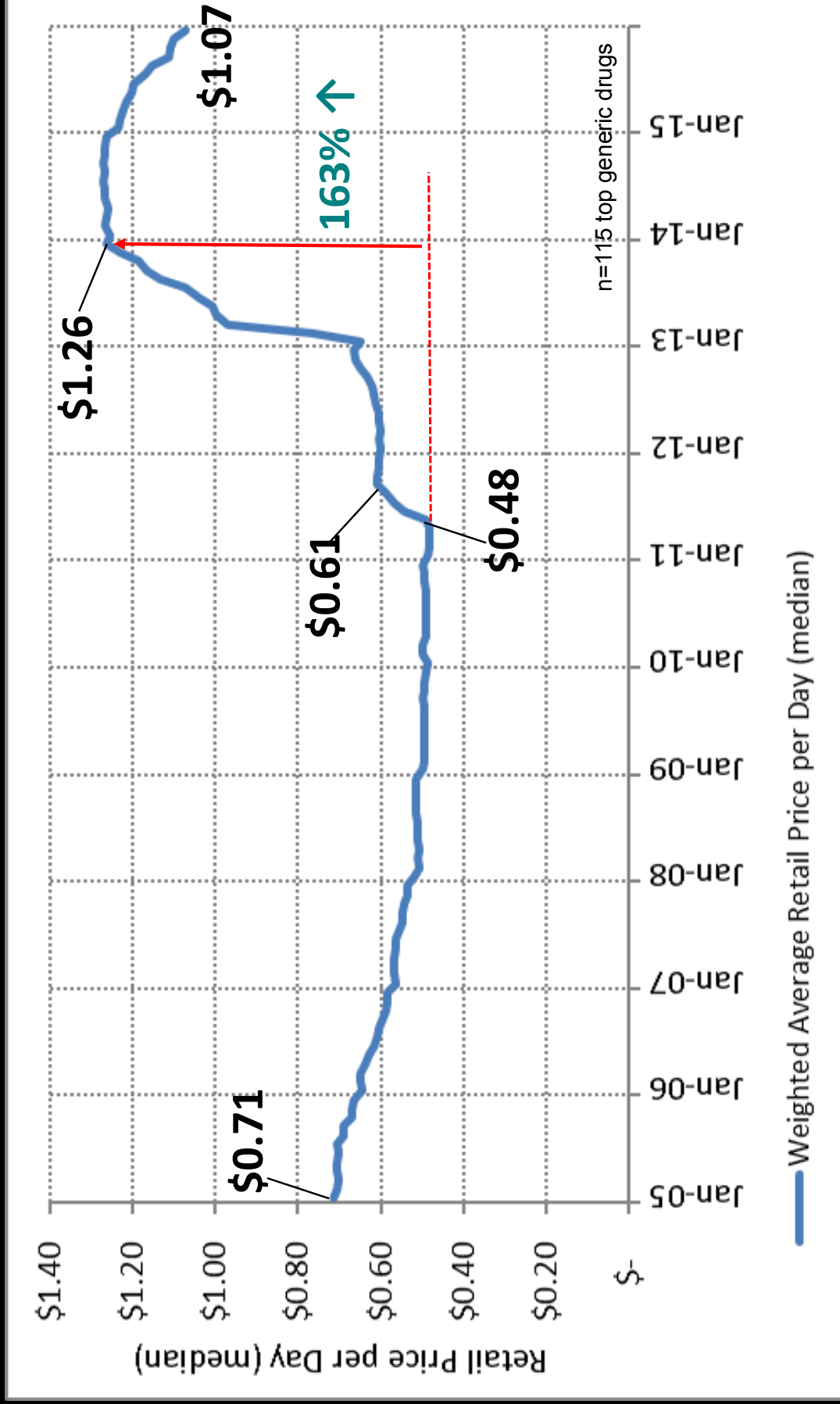




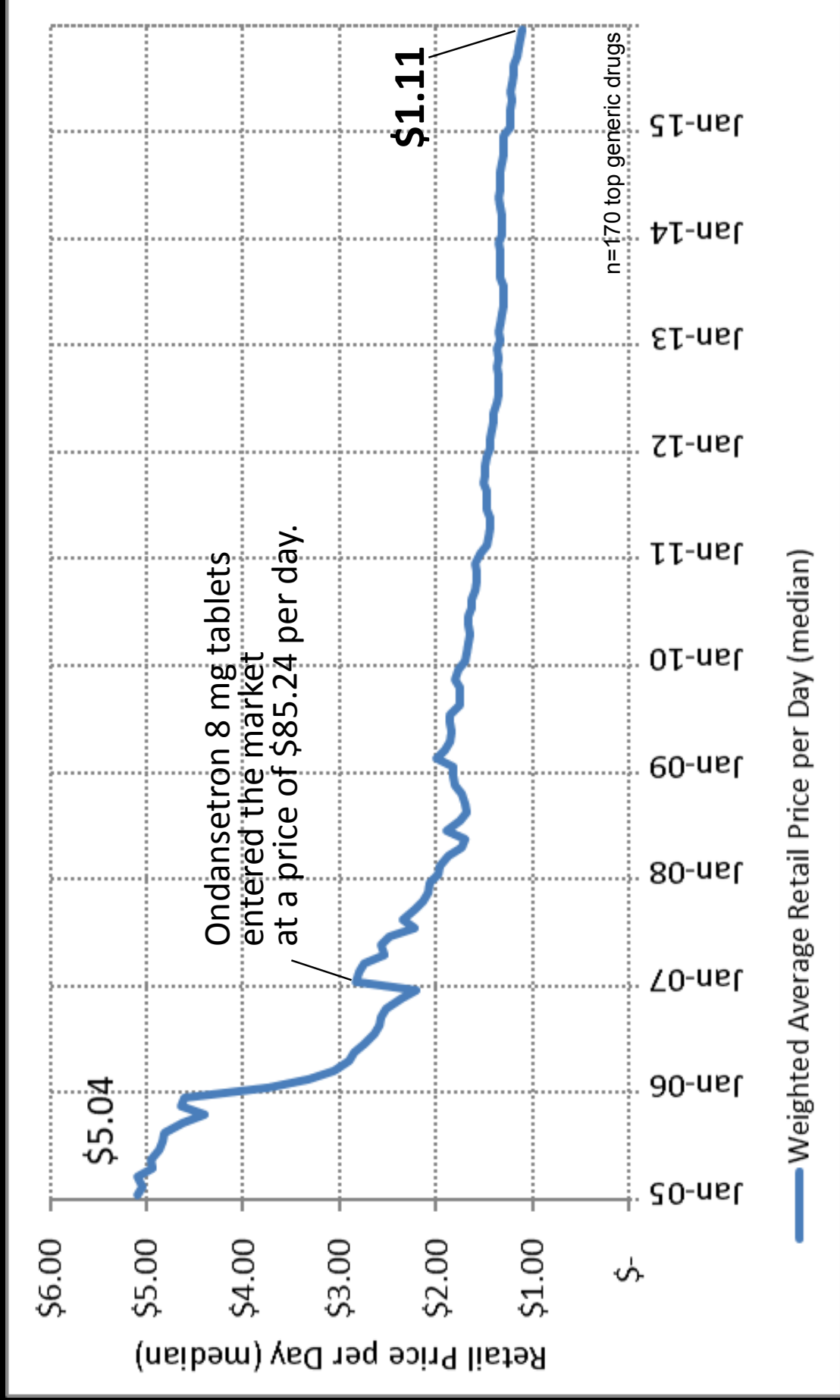
# Weighted Average Annual Percent Change in Retail Price for Older Cohort (1980-2003) of Most Widely Used Generic Prescription Drugs, 2006 to 2015



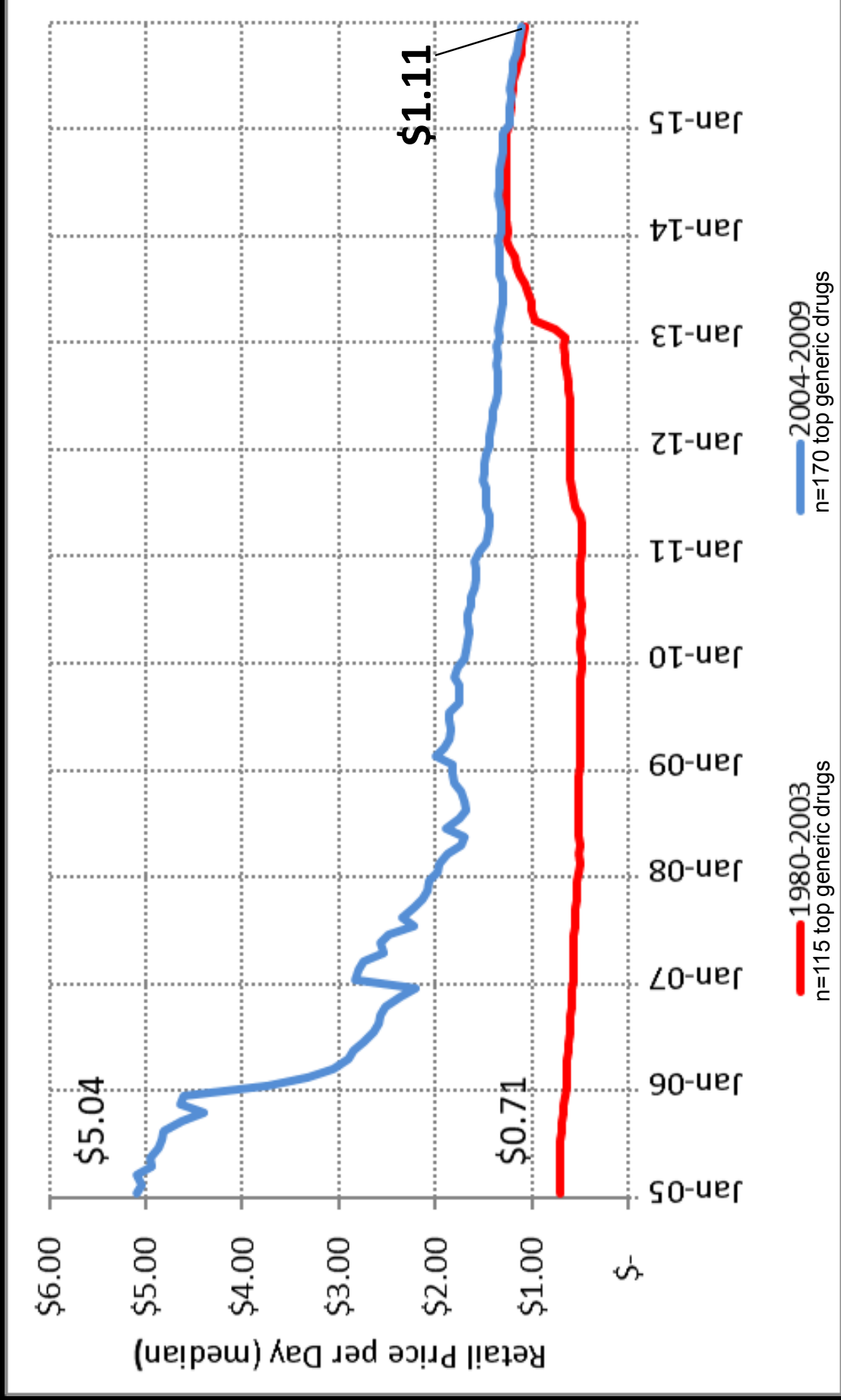
# Weighted Average Retail Price Paid per Day for Older Cohort (1980-2003) of Most Widely Used Generic Prescription Drugs: 2005 to 2015



# Weighted Average Retail Price Paid per Day for Newer Cohort (2004-2009) of Most Widely Used Generic Prescription Drugs: 2005 to 2015

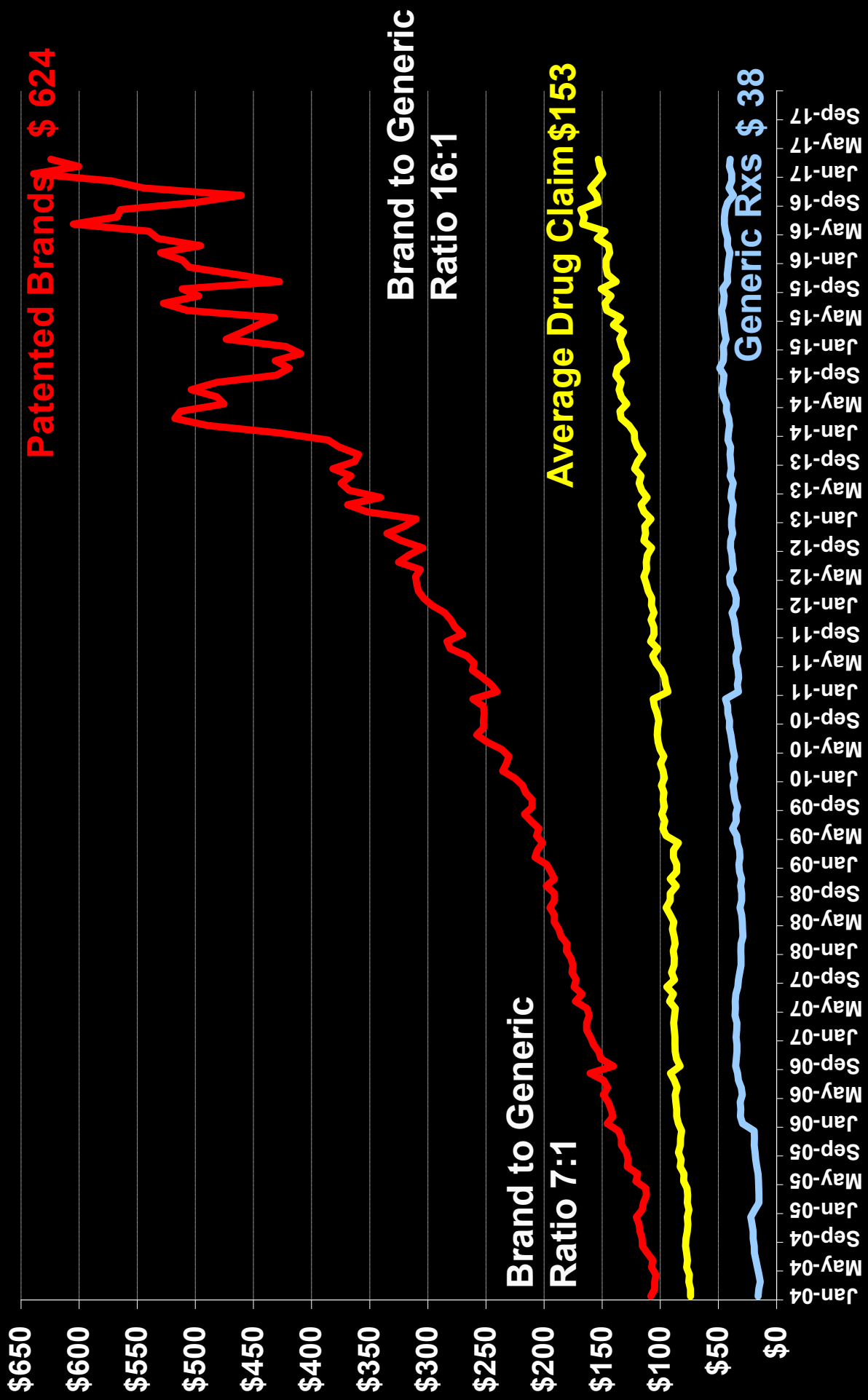


# Weighted Average Retail Price per Day (median) from 2005 to 2015 For Older Generic Cohort (1980-2003) & Newer Generic Cohort (2004-2009)



# Total Paid (\$) per Claim by Drug Type: 2004 (Jan.) to 2017 (Mar.)

**\$ / Claim**



Based on data from Univ. of Minnesota self-insured drug benefit (UPlan) 2004 to 2017 & compiled by PRIME Institute, University of Minnesota.

# Finding Fixes for the Future

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## Make Drug Prices Transparent & Accountable

### Systematically Monitor for Extraordinary Drug Prices

- Screen for prices & price changes that are ‘unconscionable’ & ‘unreasonable’
- Single point price changes >10%, >25%, >50% & >100%

## Link Transparent Prices, Accountability & Coverage

- Quasi-governmental commission reviews & evaluates prices & price changes
- Price behavior not justified, drug not covered by Medicare, Medicaid, commercial insurance

## Prohibit Market Distorting Behaviors

- Copay Coupons, Undisclosed Rebates, Patents for Product Hopping & Combination Products
- HHS OIG has declared copay coupons as ‘kickbacks’ & prohibited them in government programs

## Recognize Economic Impact of FDA Policy & Action

## Enable Value-Based Decisions → Requires Actual

# Understanding Competition in Prescription Drug Markets: Entry and Supply Chain Dynamics

Panel 1: Generic Drug Competition: Understanding Demand, Price and  
Supply Issues

# BREAK



# Understanding Competition in Prescription Drug Markets: Entry and Supply Chain Dynamics

**Panel 2: Understanding Intermediaries: Pharmacy Benefit Managers**

November 8, 2017

FEDERAL TRADE



Leonard D. Schaeffer Center  
for Health Policy & Economics

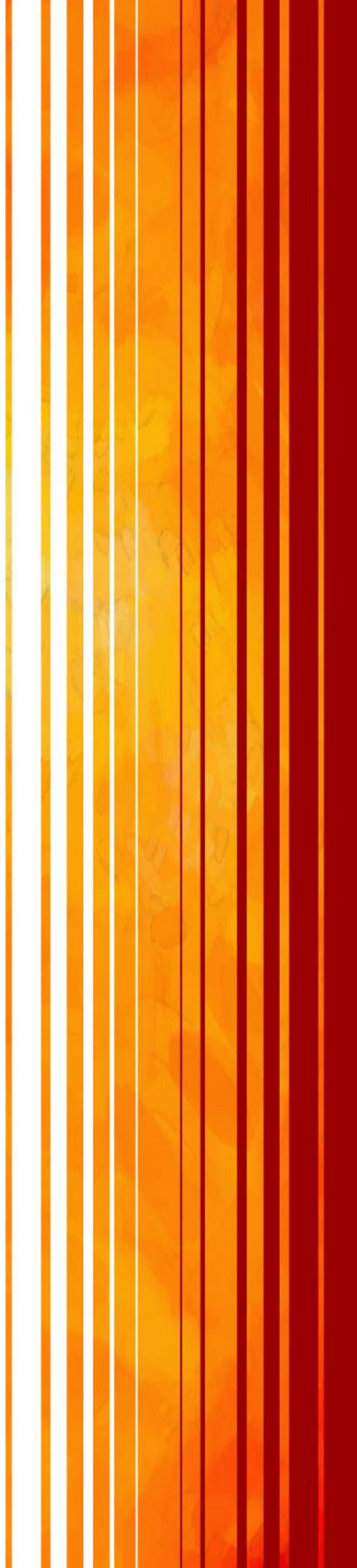


Sol Price School of Public

# Follow the money: The flow of funds in the pharmaceutical distribution system

**Neeraj Sood**

Vice Dean for Research and Professor, USC Price School of Public Policy  
Faculty, USC Schaeffer Center



# Disclosures

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The views expressed herein are mine and do not represent the views of the sponsors; the sponsors had no role in the research.

# Today's talk

How do drugs reach from manufacturers to consumers?

Who makes how much money?

Are PBMs making too much money?

# Conceptual framework: Flow of prescription drugs



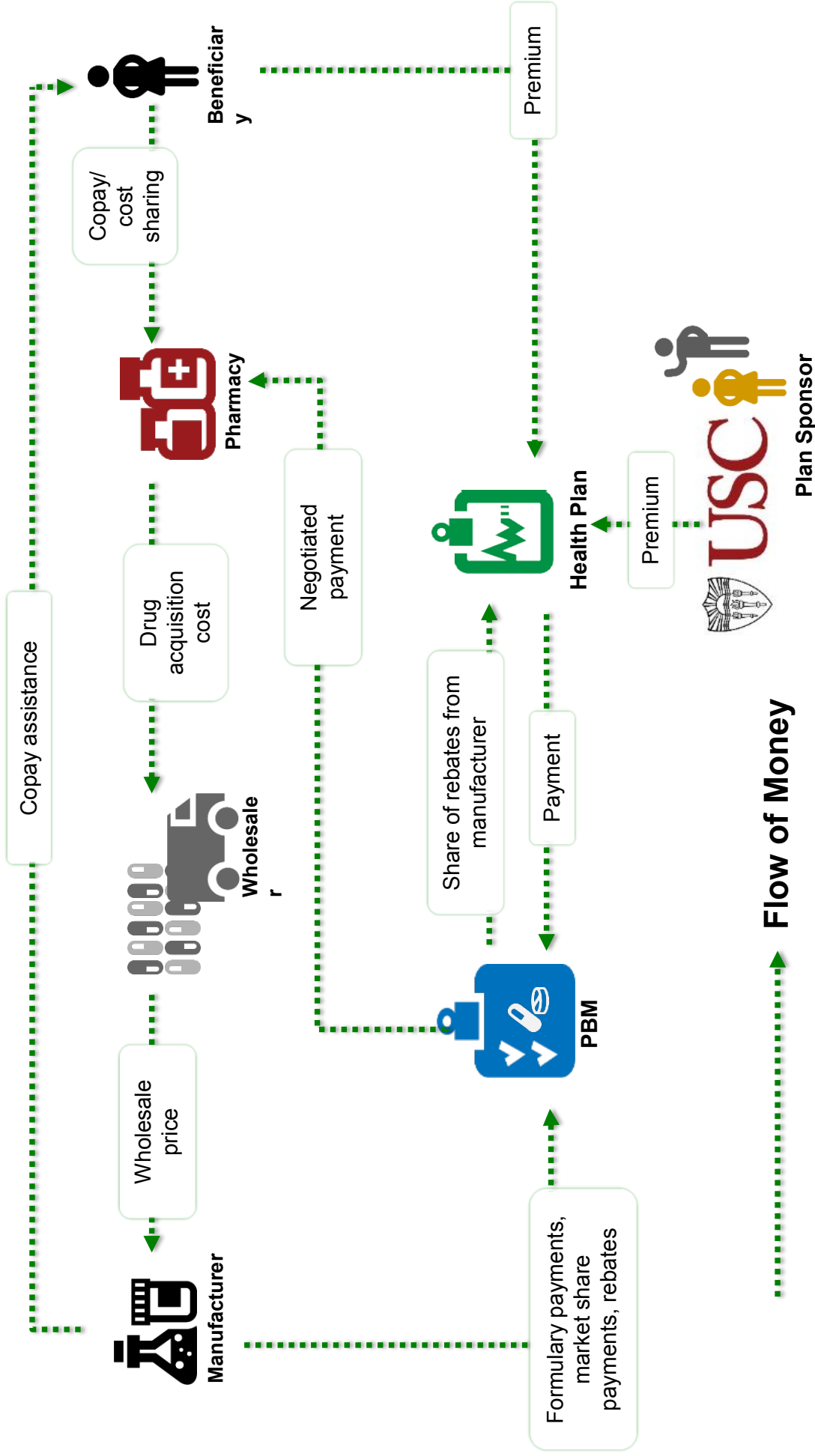
**Manufacturer**

**Wholesaler**

**Pharmacy**

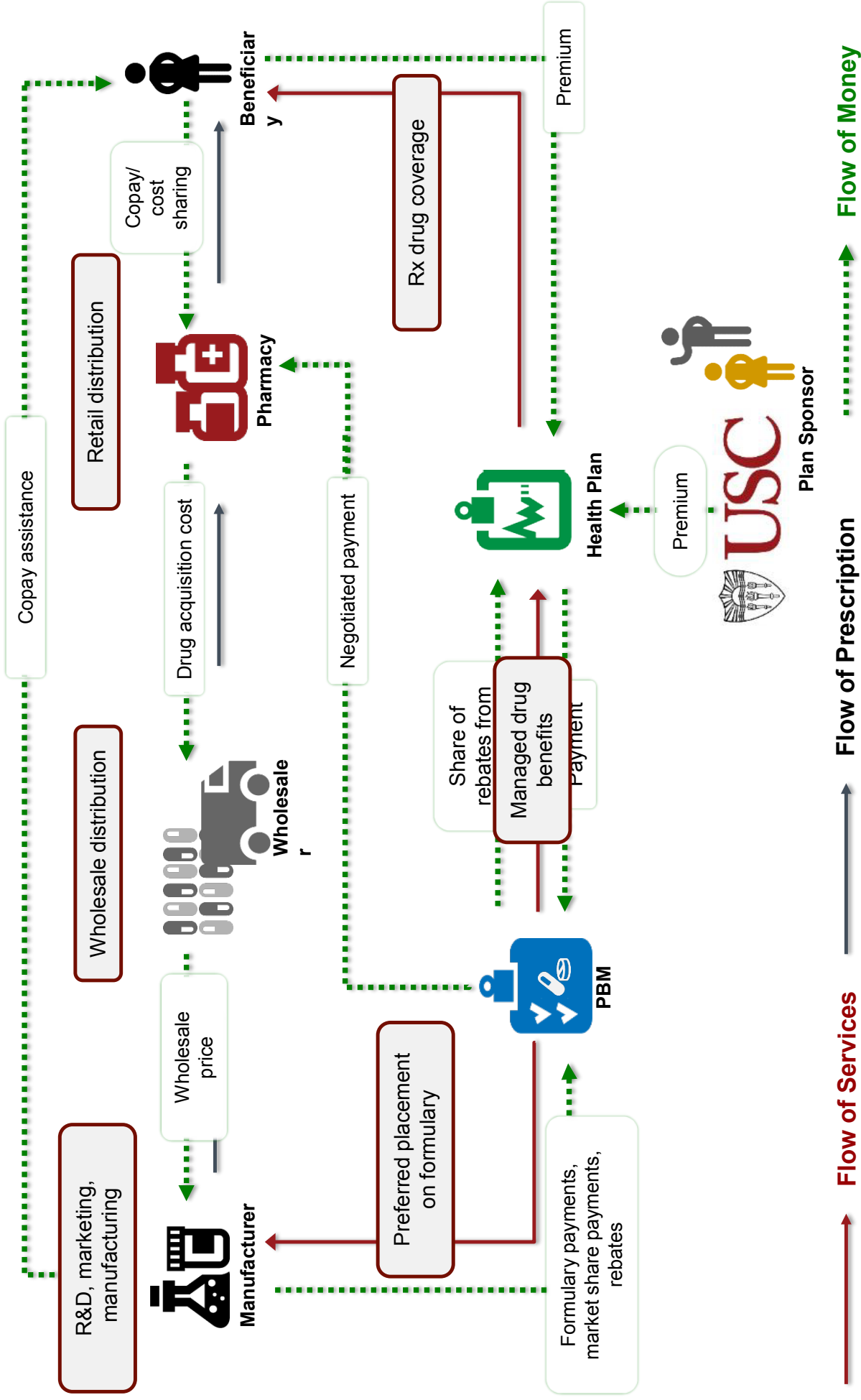
**Beneficiary**

# Conceptual framework: Flow of money



Pharmacies may be mail order or retail, and may be integrated with PBM. Plan sponsors may include employers, unions, managed care orgs, among others.

# Conceptual framework



Pharmacies may be mail order or retail, and may be integrated with PBM. Plan sponsors may include employers, unions, managed care orgs, among others.

# How do we estimate the flow of money?

Identify top publicly traded firms for each market segment: manufacturers, wholesalers, retailers, pharmacy benefit managers, & health plans

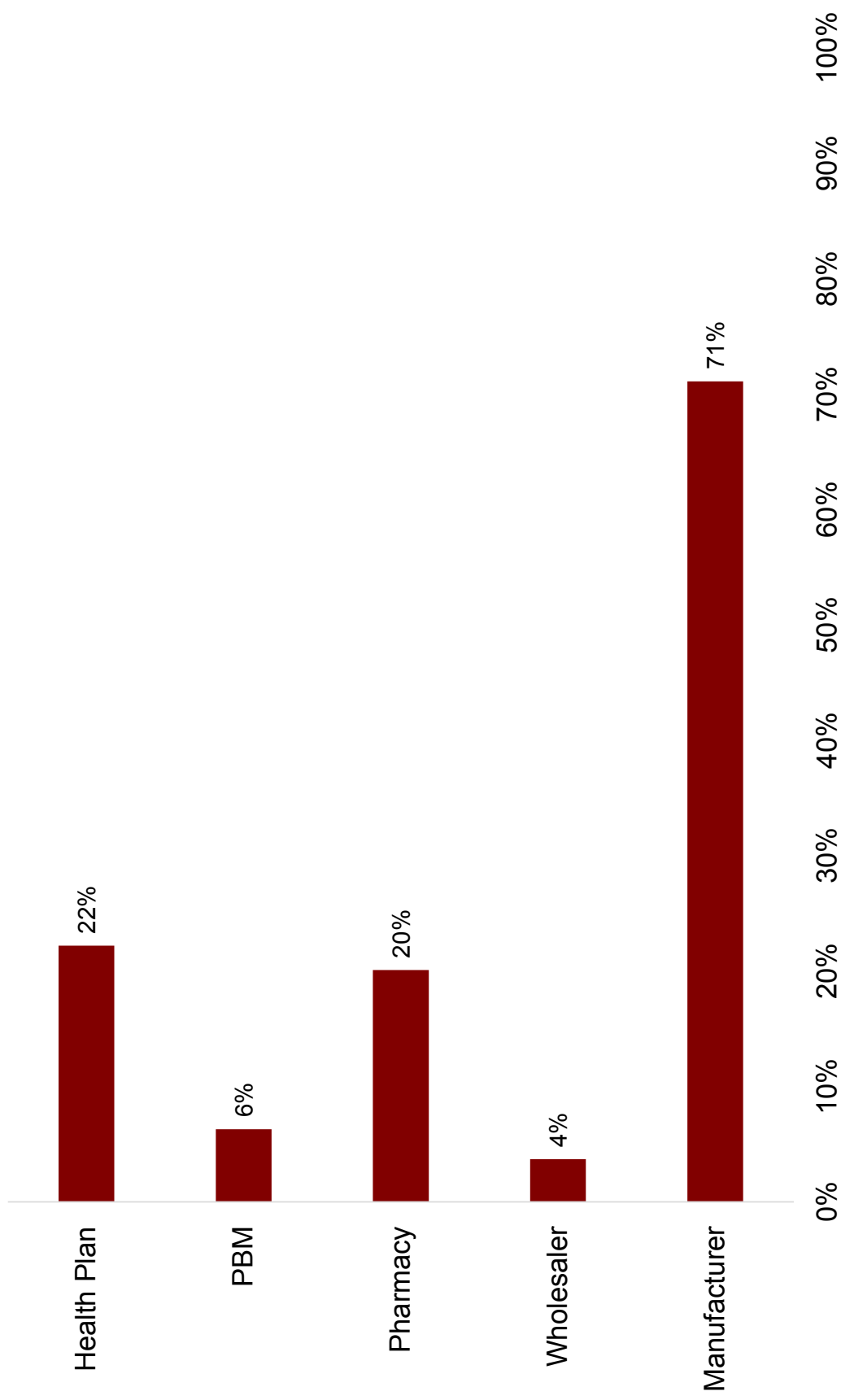
Use SEC filings of these firms to estimate:

- Gross profits: Revenue less cost of goods/services sold
- Net profits: The profits returned to owners after operating expenses

Use the conceptual framework and financial data to illustrate the flow of funds for a drug purchased by an insured consumer at a retail pharmacy

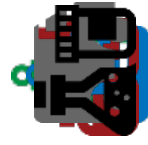
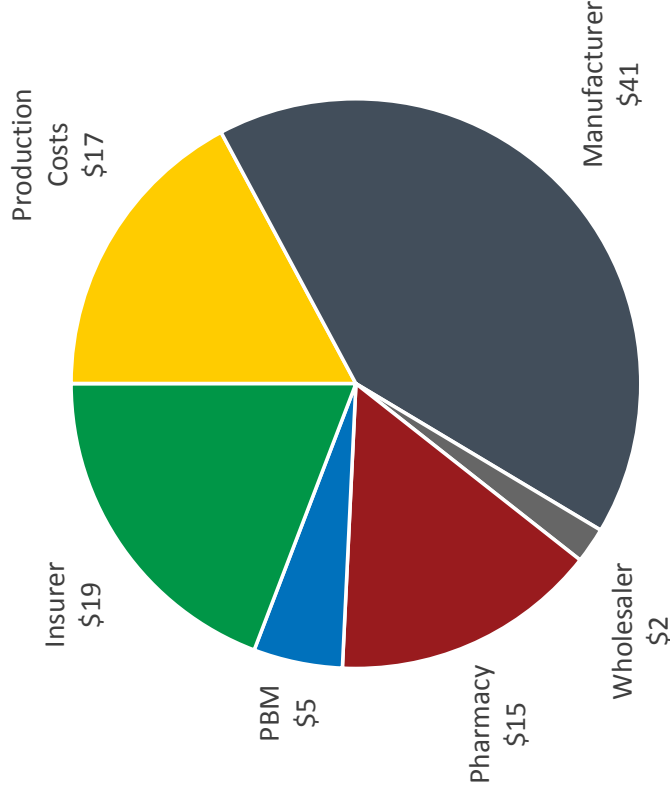
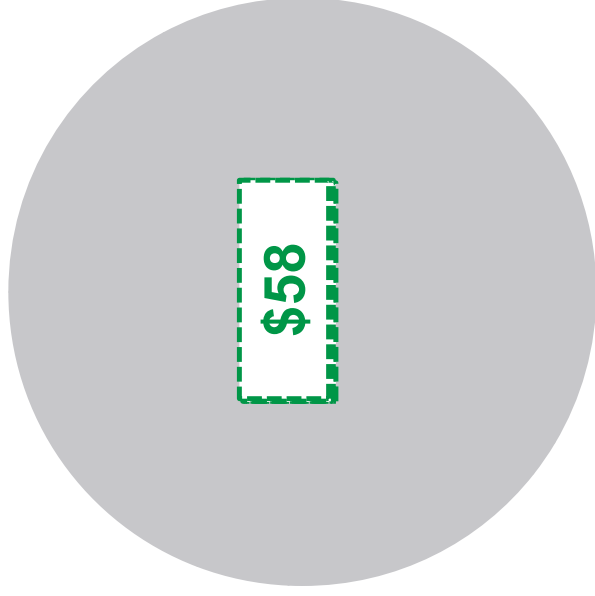


# Gross profit margins



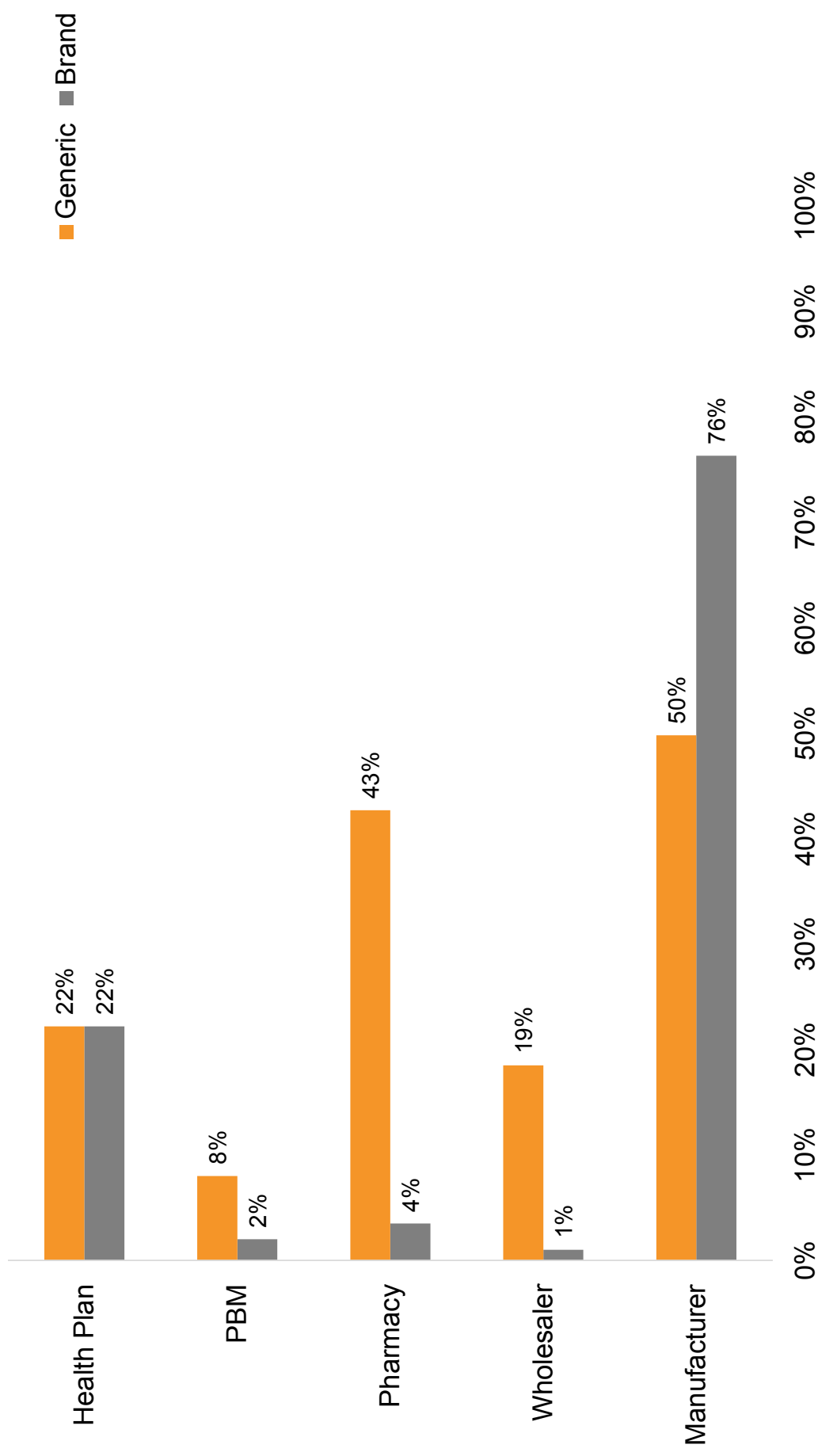
All gross margins are US sales-weighted averages based on data from 2015 SEC 10K filings and annual reports

# Flow of \$100 spent on pharmaceutical drugs, overall industry

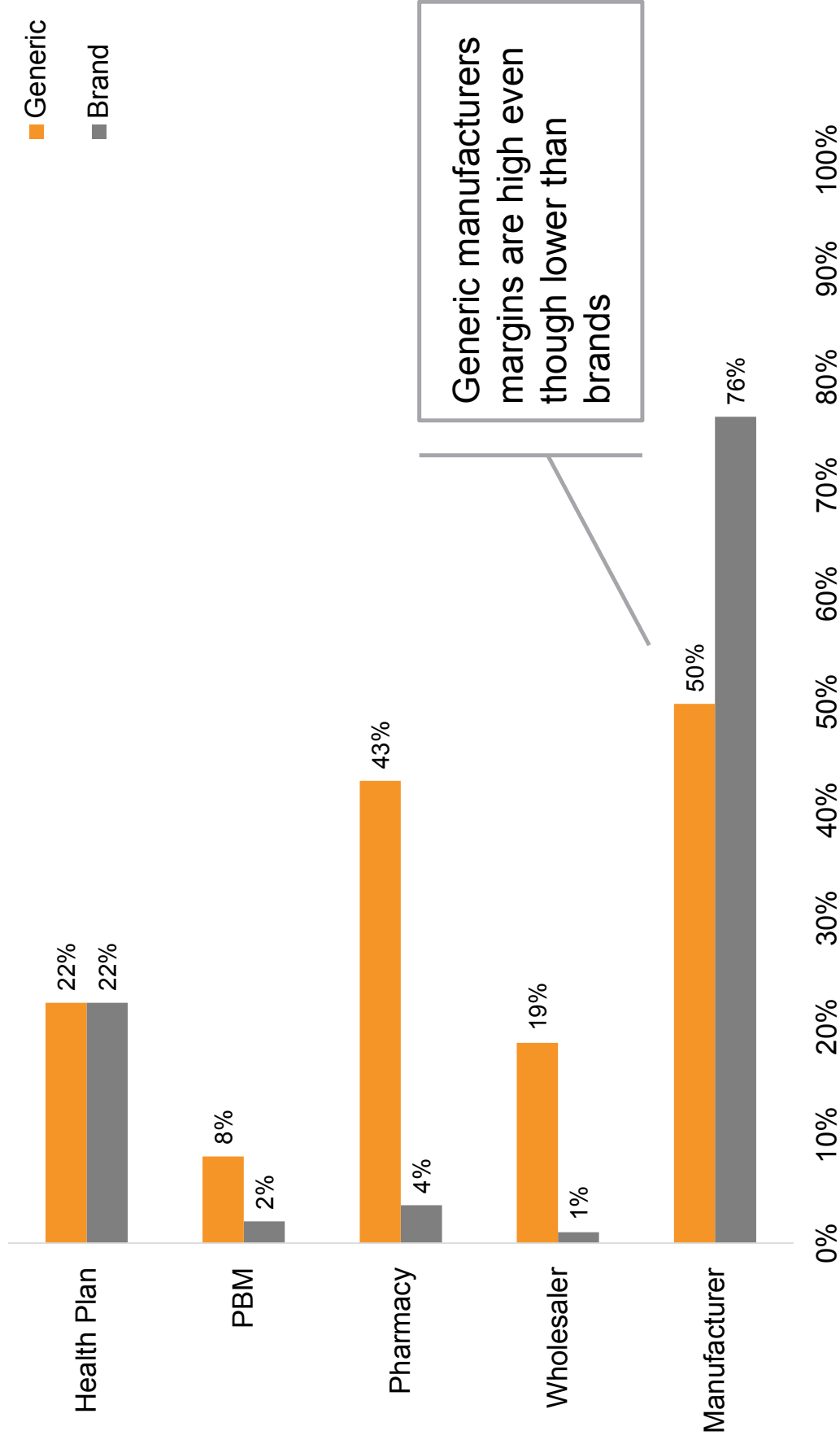


**PBM** ~~is a~~ ~~the~~ ~~pharmaceutical~~ ~~industry's~~ ~~big~~ ~~player~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~game~~ ~~of~~ ~~drug~~ ~~pricing~~ ~~and~~ ~~rebates~~ ~~and~~ ~~is~~ ~~the~~ ~~one~~ ~~that~~ ~~is~~ ~~able~~ ~~to~~ ~~negotiate~~ ~~discounts~~ ~~and~~ ~~rebates~~ ~~with~~ ~~drug~~ ~~makers~~.

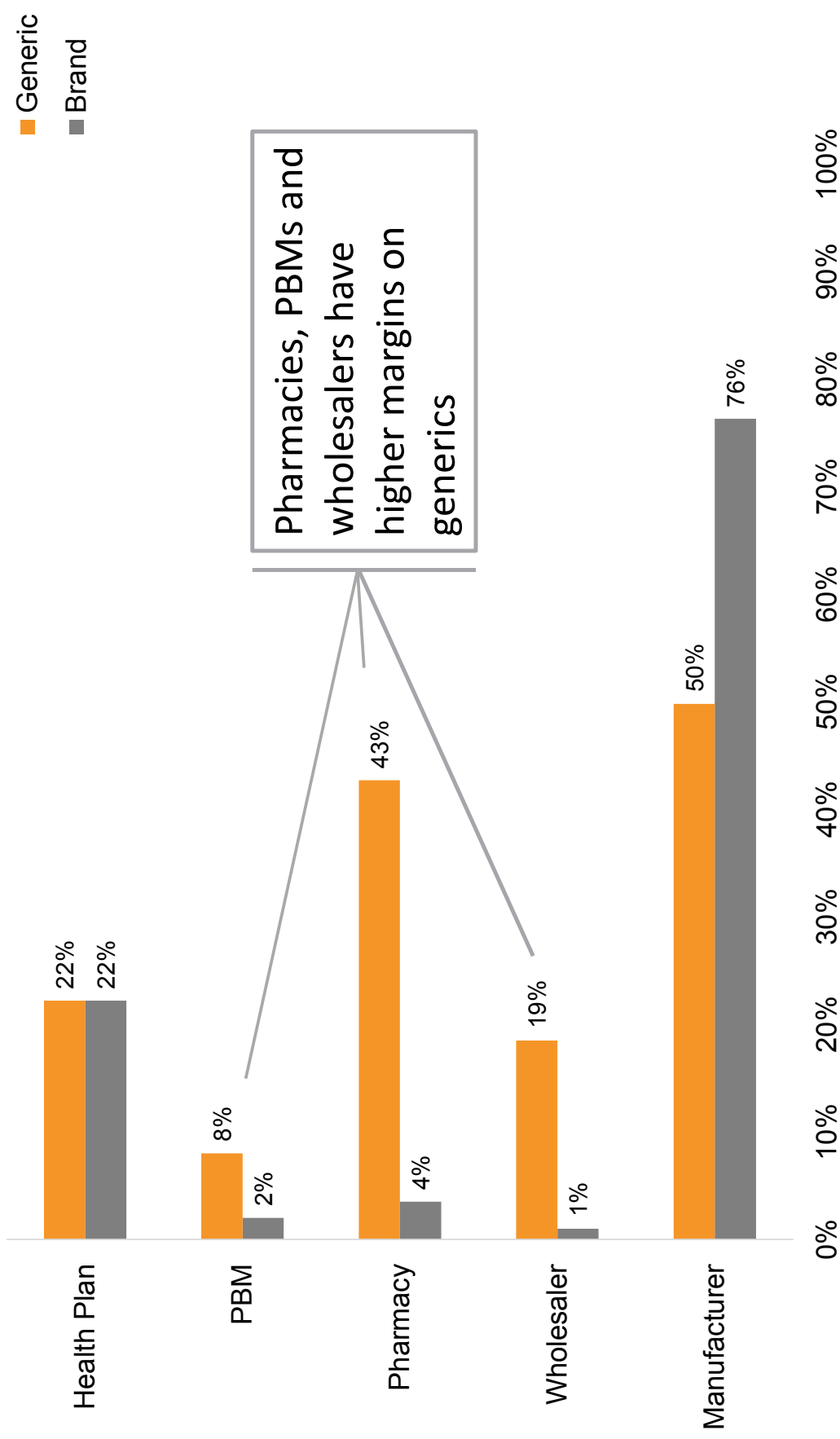
# Gross profit margins: Brands versus generics



# Gross profit margins: Brands versus generics



# Gross profit margins: Brands versus generics

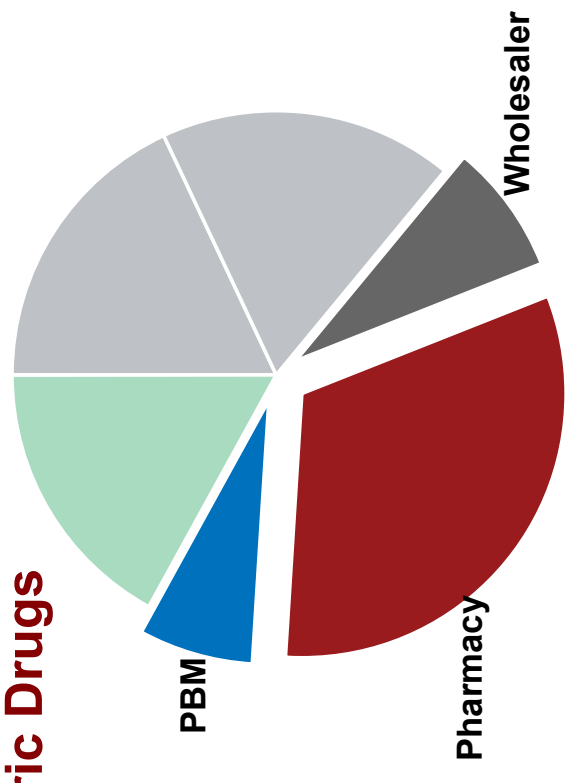


# Flow of \$100 spent on pharmaceutical drugs, brand and generic

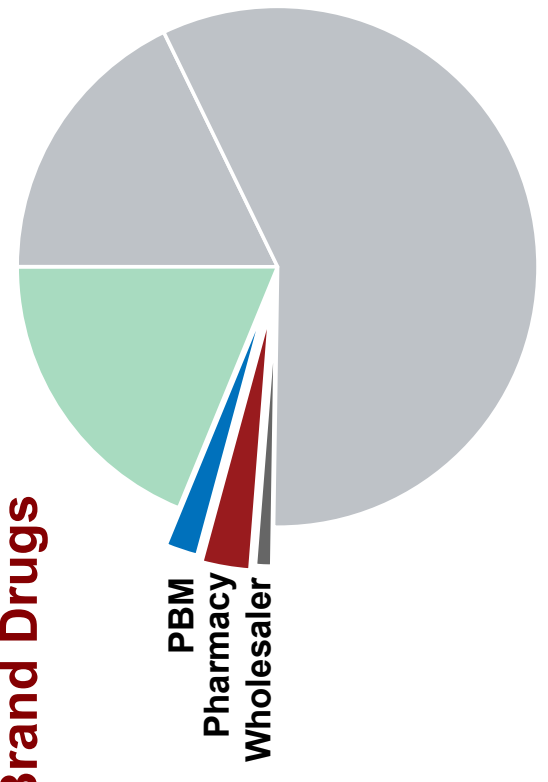
Pharmacy, PBM, Pharmacies, and Wholesalers capture \$47 for every \$100 on generics

Pharmacy captures \$8 for every \$100 on brand drugs

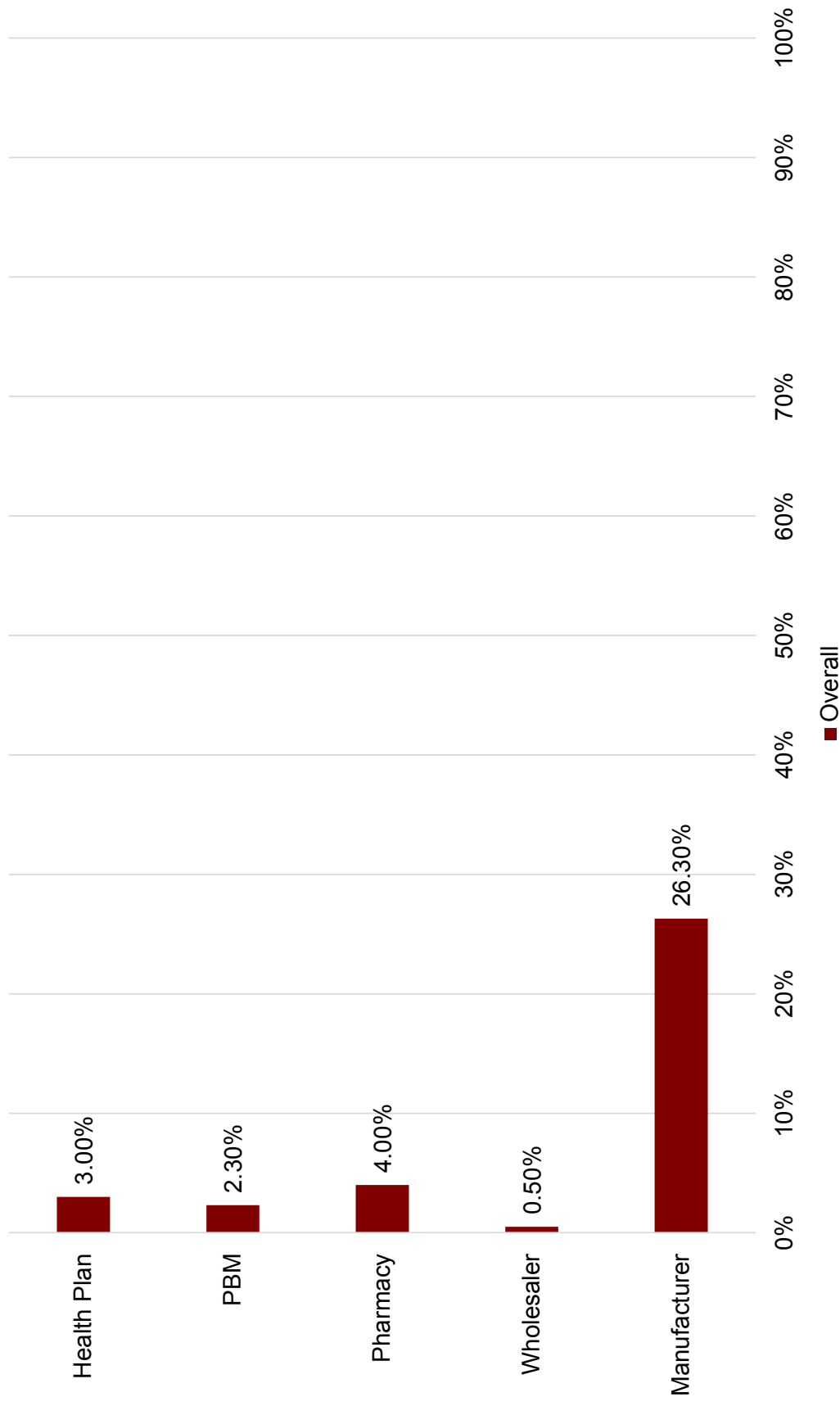
Generic Drugs



Brand Drugs

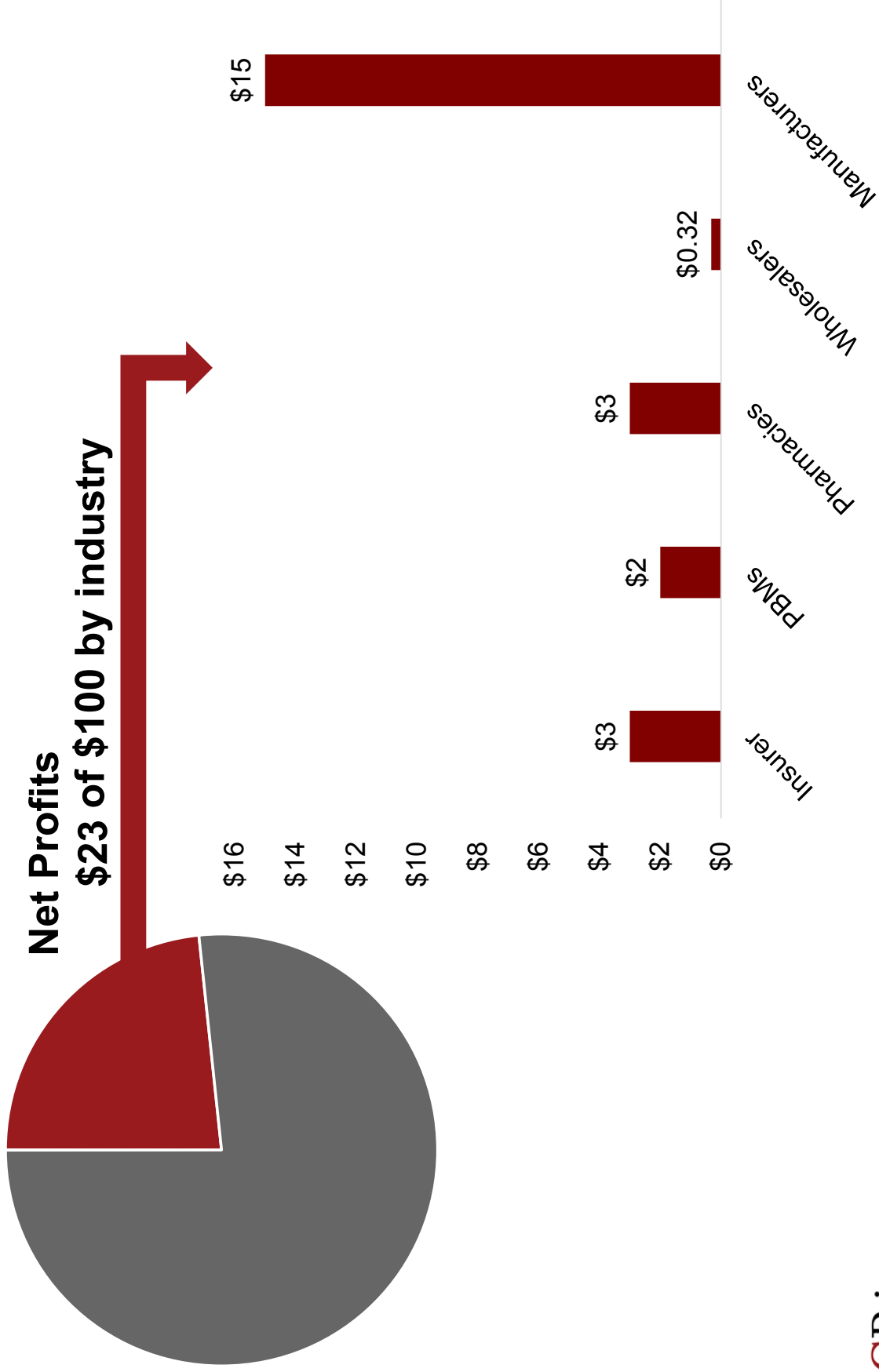


# Net profit margins



All net profit margins are US sales-weighted averages based on data from 2015 SEC 10K filings and annual reports

# Net profits, overall industry





## Are PBMs making too much money?

- . Evaluate level of competition or concentration in these markets
- . Compare returns of PBMs to other industries
- . Compare returns of PBMs to “value” provided
- . Evaluate if PBM incentives are aligned with incentives of plans and consumers

# PBM market segment is highly concentrated

Top 3 PBMs control more than two-thirds market share



Higher concentration means:

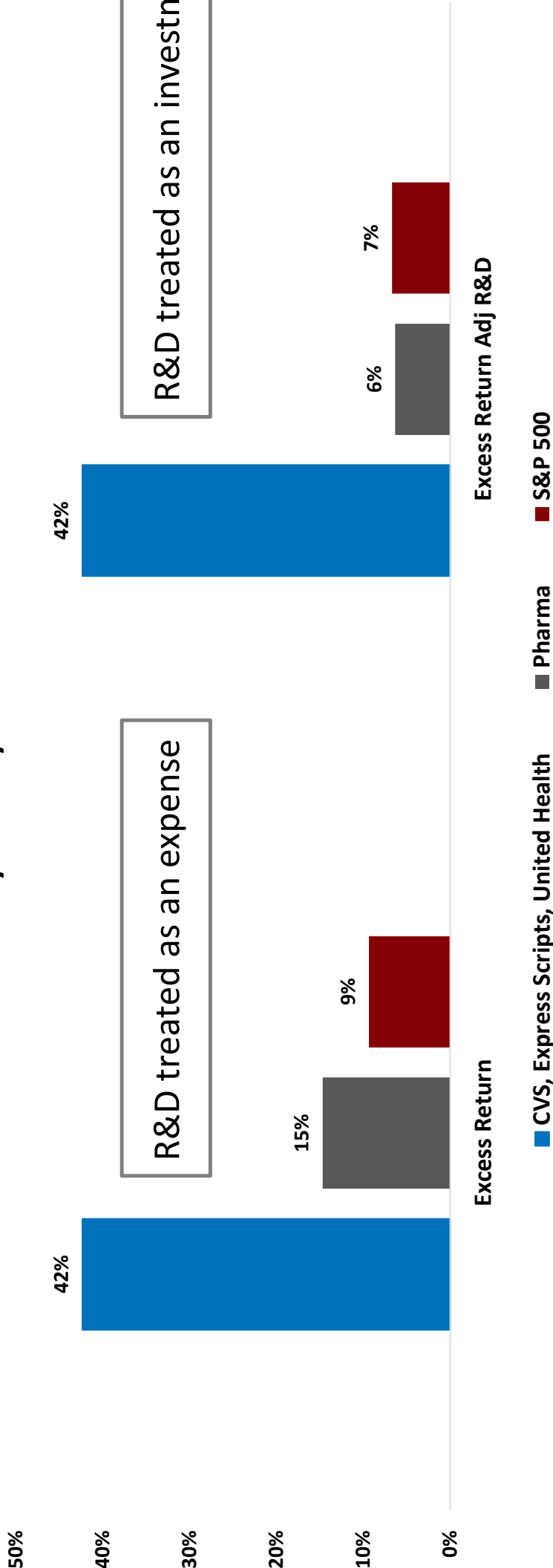
- More bargaining power to negotiate lower prices with manufacturers and pharmaceutical companies
- More market power relative to health plans and consumers

The link between PBM market power and consumer savings is tenuous



# Are PBMs making “excess” returns?

Median Excess Returns by Industry Sector



**Excess Return** = Return on invested capital – weight average cost of capital

**Excess Return adjusted for R&D** treats R&D as an investment rather than expense

The **weighted average cost of capital (WACC)** is the rate that a company is expected to pay on average to all its security holders to finance its assets. **Return on invested capital (ROIC)** is a profitability ratio. It measures the return that an investment generates for those who have provided capital, bondholders and stockholders. ROIC tells us how good a company is at turning capital into profits. (Source: <http://www.htahealth.com>)

# Are PBMs earning their value?

For every \$100 in spent on drugs PBMs keep about \$5

Without PBMs, we would save \$5, but also not get the value provided:

- Lower drug prices for health plans, consumers
- Lower reimbursement to pharmacies
- Higher market share of generics
- Higher market share of lower cost brands

Is the value from PBMs worth more than \$5?



**Drug A with PBM:**

Price: \$100

Rebate: \$10

- PBM keeps \$5

**Cost to health plan: \$95**



**Drug A without PBM:**

Price: \$100

Rebate: \$0

**Cost to health plan: \$100**

# Are there alternatives that can do the same or better job for less?

erg ▾

Is Headed for the Prescription-Drug Analysts Say


th and Spencer Soper  
02 AM PDT  
r 6, 2017, 2:25 PM PDT

Search

FiercePharma

's 'inaction,' lawmakers push ahead with Medicare negotiation plan


y | Oct 25, 2017 10:56am



HTA  
HEALTH TRANSFORMATION ALLIANCE

PHARMACEUTICAL SOLUTIONS

that offer a new kind of partnership with PBMs that includes market-leading terms and features that e  
increased savings and transparency, for example: full financial disclosure, financial disclosure auditing  
and participation in the development of formularies.



REUTERS ▾

Anthem signs agreement with CVS Health for new PBM business

REUTERS





## Anthem signs agreement with CVS Health for new PBM business

Reuters Staff





1 MIN READ

Oct 18 (Reuters) - Drug retailer CVS Health Corp said on Wednesday it into an agreement with Anthem Inc to provide services to the health ins

# Rebates misalign incentives: Issues of list price inflation

	 <b>PBMs keeps</b> (=10% of rebate)	 <b>Cost to health plans</b> (= retail price - rebate pass through)	 <b>Net revenue to manufacturers</b> (= retail price - retail and wholesale mark-up- rebate)	 <b>cost to consumers?</b>
<b>(Low)</b> List price: \$200 Rebate: \$50	\$5	\$155 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	\$130 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Uninsured might pay price <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Insured consumer deductible might pay price <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Insured may pay higher premiums <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>(High)</b> List price: \$250 Rebate: \$60	\$6 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	\$156	\$129	

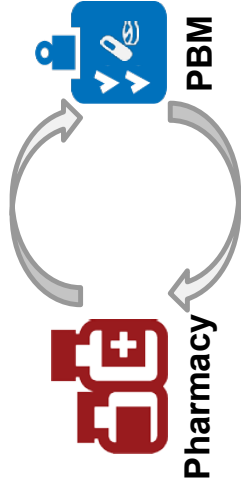
# Rebates misalign incentives: Not choosing cheaper drug

	 PBMs keeps	 Cost to health plans
 Drug A Retail Price: \$200 • rebate of \$50	\$5 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	\$155
 Drug B Retail Price: \$100 • rebate of \$30	\$3	\$73 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

# PBMs and pharmacies

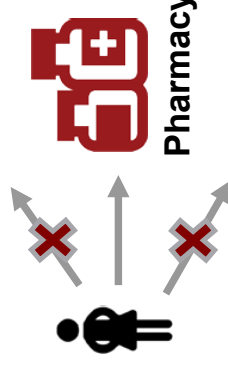
## BM ownership of mail order pharmacies: Misaligned Incentives

- Might pay higher prices to PBM-owned pharmacy
- Might overuse PBM-owned pharmacy



## Insurance network pharmacies combined with market power in insurance markets might hurt consumers

- Plans save money through lower pharmacy reimbursement
- Consumers get some of these savings but have restricted choice





# Research Agenda for FTC

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- Empirically estimate the consequences of
  - market power in PBM markets for consumers
  - list price inflation for health plans and consumers
  - narrow network pharmacies for consumers from different socio-economic neighborhoods
  - PBM ownership of pharmacies

**J Sood**  
[@healthpolicy.usc.edu](mailto:jsood@healthpolicy.usc.edu)

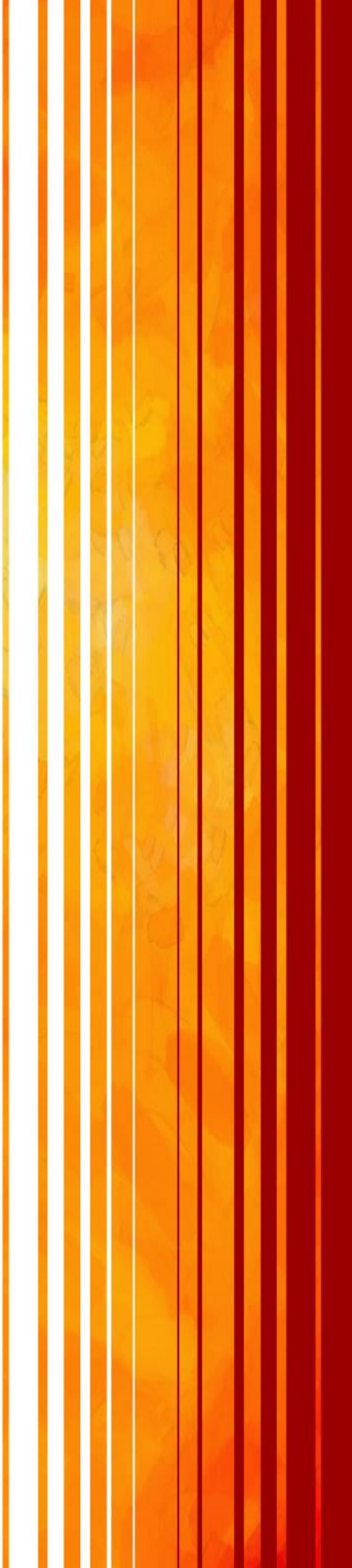
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# Top Manufacturers, by Market Share

Company	US Market Share		
	All <sup>a</sup>	Brands <sup>a</sup>	Generics <sup>13</sup>
Gilead Sciences (Brand)	6.9%	10.9%	--
J&J (Brand)	5.9%	9.4%	--
Roche (Brand)	5.7%	9.0%	--
Merck & Co (Brand)	5.7%	9.0%	--
Amgen (Brand)	5.3%	8.5%	--
Pfizer (Brand)	4.7%	7.4%	--
Fresenius Kabi (Generic)	4.6%	--	3.1%
AbbVie (Brand)	4.4%	6.9%	--
Sanofi (Brand)	4.3%	6.8%	--
Novartis (Brand)	3.3%	5.3%	--
Astrazeneca (Brand)	3.1%	4.8%	--
Allergan (Brand)	3.0%	4.7%	--
GlaxoSmith Kline (Brand)	2.6%	4.2%	--
Pfizer-Hospira (Generic)	2.3%	--	3.6%
Teva (Brand)	2.1%	3.3%	--
Mylan (Generic)	1.6%	--	8.8%
Teva (Generic)	1.5%	--	12.2%
Novartis-Sandoz (Generic)	1.1%	--	11.5%
Allergan-Actavis (Generic)	1.1%	--	8.9%
Aspen (Generic)	0.4%	--	4.1%
Lupin (Generic)	0.3%	--	2.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>55%</b>

[Back to presentation](#)

# Top PBMs, by Market Share

Pharmacy Benefit Managers	
Company	Share <sup>11</sup>
Express Scripts	29%
CVS Health	24%
Optum Rx	13%
<b>Total</b>	<b>66%</b>

# Top Wholesalers, by Market Share

Wholesalers	
Company	Share <sup>10</sup>
McKesson	32.7%
AmerisourceBergen	31.6%
Cardinal Health	20.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>85%</b>

# Top Pharmacies, by Market Share

Pharmacies	
Company	Share <sup>12</sup>
Walgreens	14.9%
CVS Retail	13.8%
Express Scripts Mail Order Pharmacy	11.0%
CVS Mail Order	9.0%
Walmart	5.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>54%</b>

# Top Insurers, by Market Share

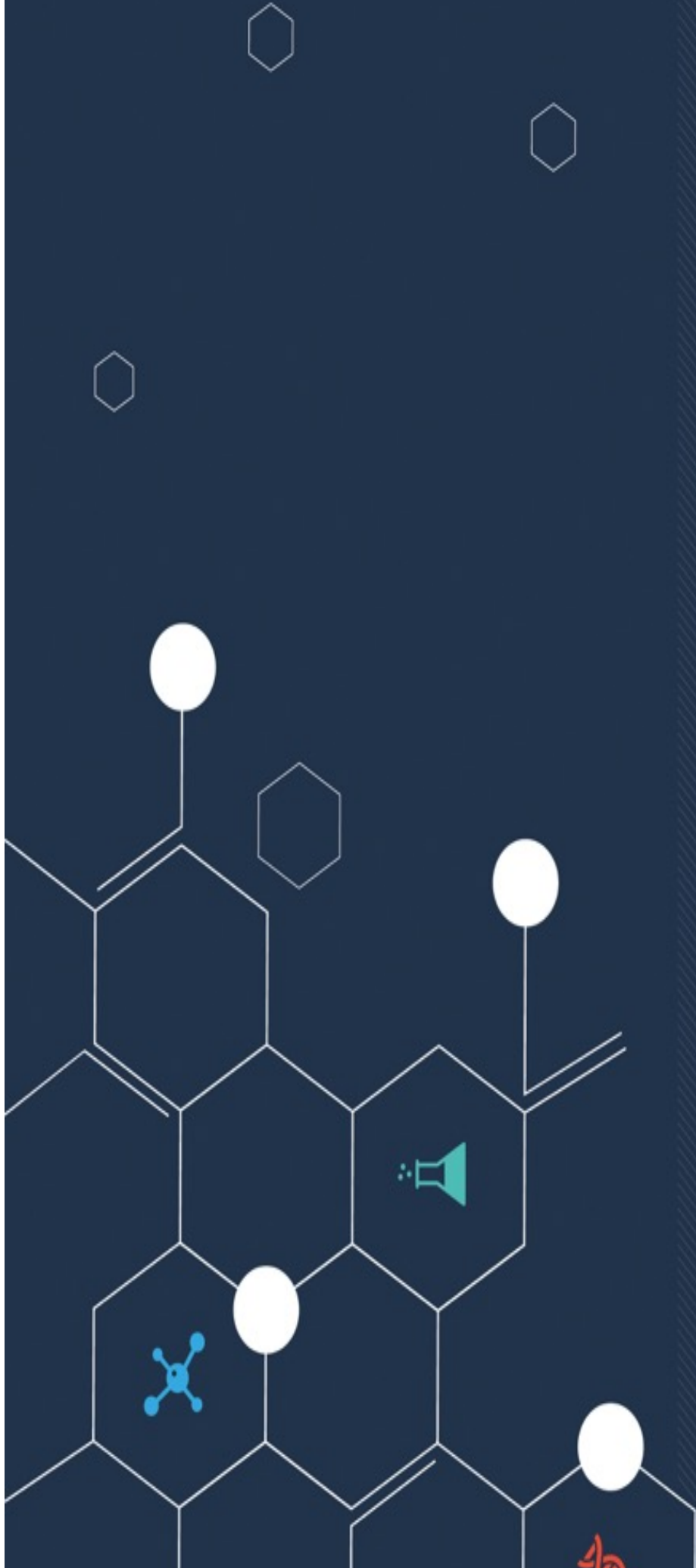
Insurers <sup>8</sup>	
Company	Share <sup>b</sup>
UnitedHealth Group	11.4%
Anthem	9.2%
Aetna	4.1%
Cigna	4.5%
Humana	8.7%
Centene	3.4%
HealthNet	2.6%
WellCare	2.1%
Molina	2.0%
Magellan	0.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>49%</b>

# Mark Merritt

## President and CEO

### Pharmaceutical Care Management Association





# Federal Trade Commission- PBM Workshop

Jenny Bryant- Senior Vice President  
Policy & Research

November 8, 2017

# In the Midst of Great Progress, Cost Growth is Modest

Per capita spending growth.

AMGEN  
P  
RESS SCRIPTS®

2.2%  
2015



2.8%  
2016

CVS  
Health

5%  
2015



3.2%  
2016



PRIME  
THERAPEUTICS®

2.8%  
2016



0.8%  
First Half 2017



Quintiles  
formerly known as

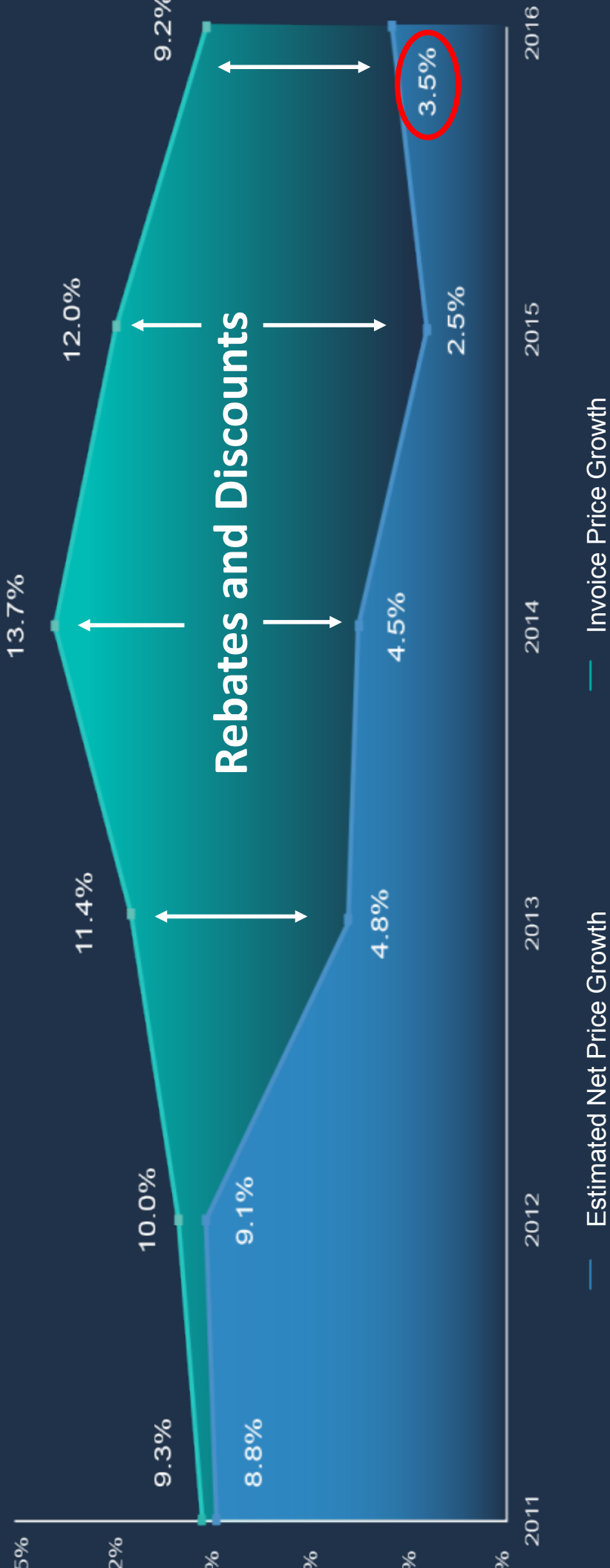
7.8%  
2015



4.1%  
2016

al sector.  
nita based on author's calculation.

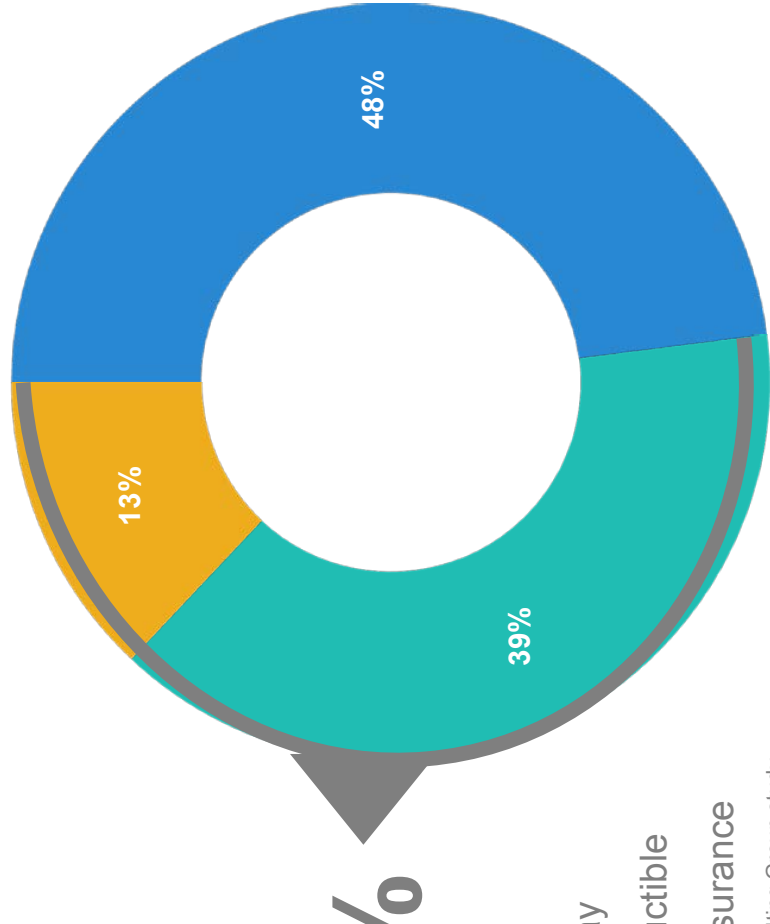
# and medicine prices grew just 3.5% in 2016, after rebates and discounts were removed



# too often negotiated savings do not make r way to patients

More than half of commercially insured patients' out-of-pocket spending for brand-name prescriptions is based on the full list price

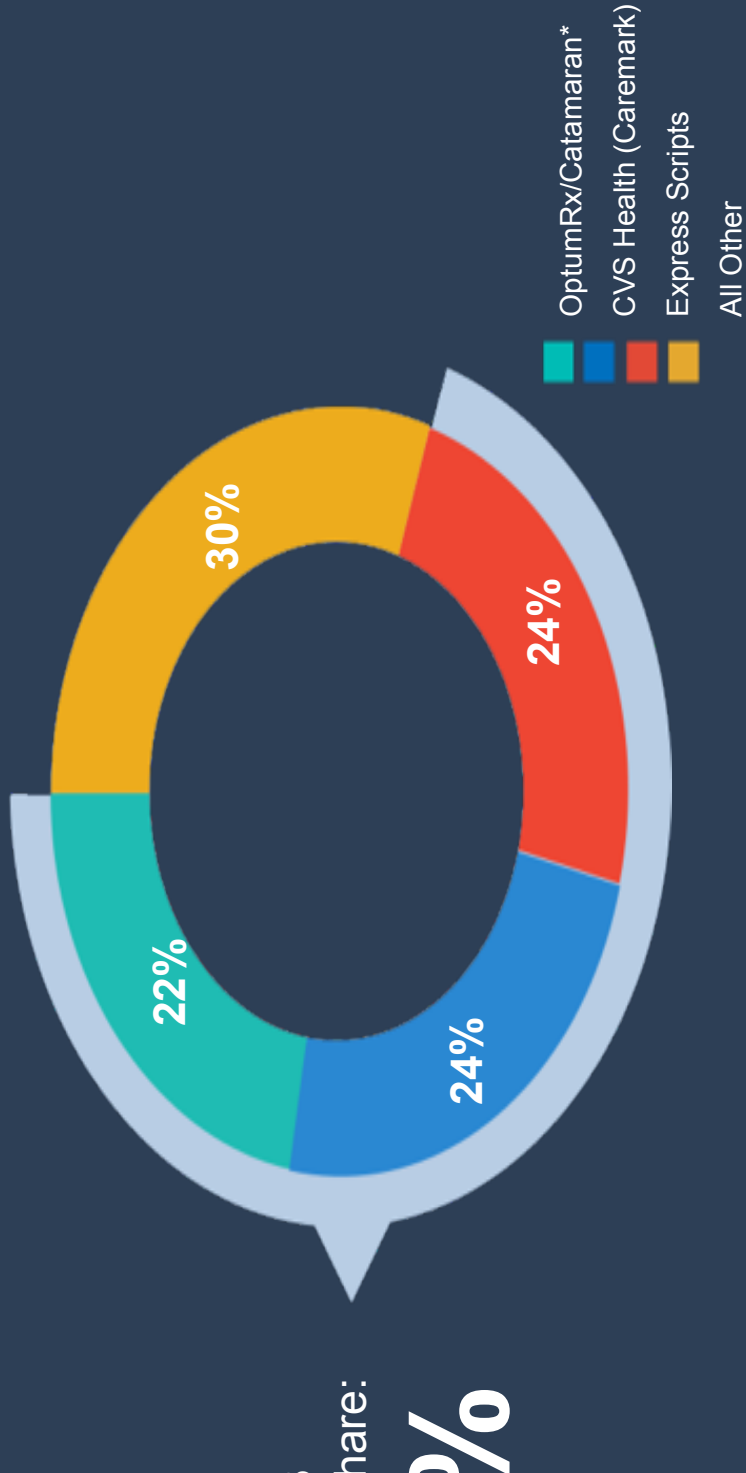
Cost sharing for nearly 1 in 5 brand-name prescriptions is based on list price



by  
ctible  
surance  
iting Group study.

# Insurers and PBMs Have a Lot of Leverage to Hold Down Medicine Costs

Insurers' negotiating power is increasingly concentrated among fewer pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs).



\* OptumRx and Catamaran merged in 2015. Their 2014 shares are shown combined. Source: IMS Health Institute.

## Insurers determine

### FORMULARY

if a medicine is covered

### TIER PLACEMENT

patient cost sharing

### ACCESSIBILITY

utilization management, prior authorization or fail

### PROVIDER INCENTIVES

preferred treatment guidelines and pathways

# Employers are increasingly demanding more transparency in PBM contracts

PBMs make their profit by charging employers administrative fees.

**In some cases, theoretically, PBMs would be making nothing. But PBMs' contracts are so high. It shows that they are making money in ways that are**

*— VP and CFO, Corporate HR Shared Services*

**Now if you are maximizing the value of your PBM contract. It's very difficult and confusing. There are so many ways to contract with PBMs. There is no**

*— Director of Benefits*



*"The majority of employers are still using HR specialists to do negotiations and manage health care plans.*

*Formularies are mostly based off of cost savings not clinical outcomes and most employers don't know how*

*to ask the PBM the right questions. Contracts need to be*

*What does it really say? How is it helping my business? Employers should not engage in contracts they do*

*stand."*

*"As an employer, we learned that we are only getting 70% of our rebate dollars. We need to review our PBM contract language and if necessary, change it to demand more rebates get through."*

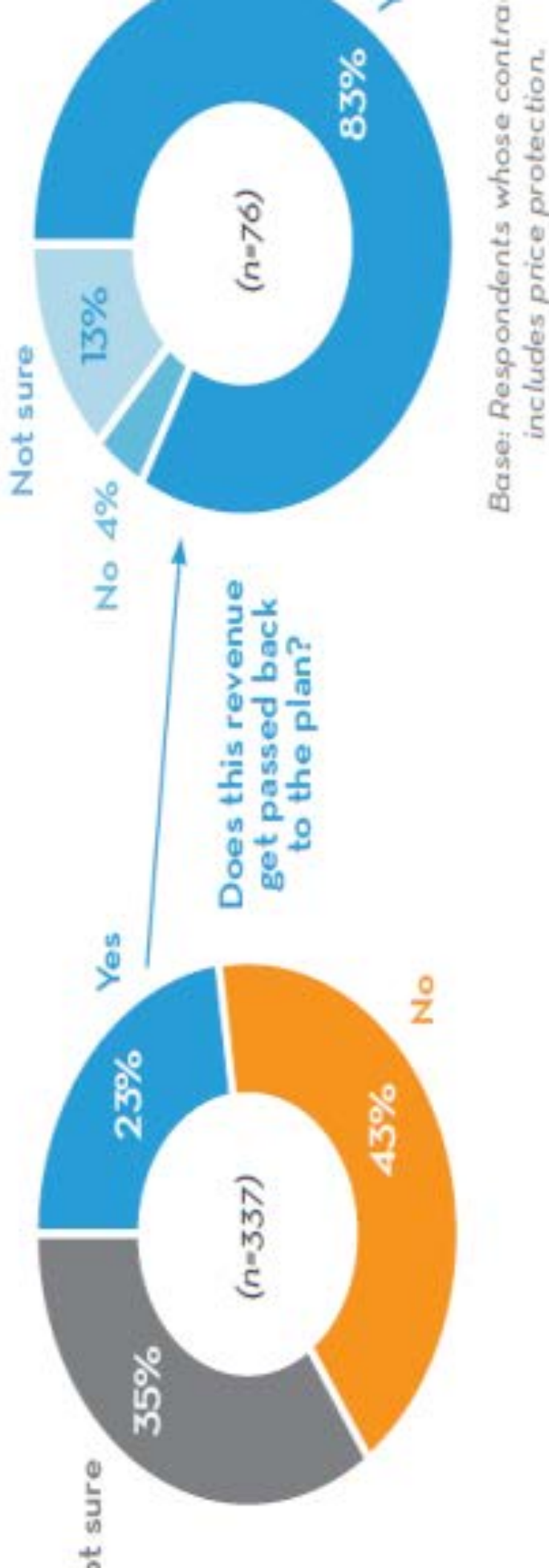
*"Our "suppliers" don't share contracts or disclosures. Employers are starting to notice and wondering why they are paying so much. We need to ask intermediaries they are paying each other and how they spent the*

**A properly designed, full pass through, transparent PBM contract is clean, audit-friendly and the best option for legal companies, but most PBMs don't want to sell you a transparent contract. Traditional contracts are much more profitable**

**- Mid-West Business Group**

# Price protection is a standard feature in PBM contracts with manufacturers

Three fourths of employers report they do not have price protection provisions in their contracts -- or weren't sure if they did



# Drug Pricing Crisis and the Role of the Intermediary

## How Did We End Up Here???

Susan Pilch, VP, Policy and Regulatory Affairs  
National Community Pharmacists Association



# Contributing Factors.....

- High deductible plans + high priced medications + consumer costs are driving increased demands for information
- Not fully understood drug supply chain and drug pricing systems
- Complete lack of awareness of hidden PBM revenue streams
- Plan sponsor dependence on PBMs to navigate drug pricing and supply chain coupled with lack of corresponding PBM fiduciary duty
- Minimal influence on formulary and plan benefit design = possible consequences on patient access to care and cost

# Independent Pharmacy Landscape

armacy owners, managers and employees of more than 22,000 independent community pharmacies across the U.S.

ten located in underserved rural or urban areas (significant # of Medicaid beneficiaries)

dependent pharmacies represent 52% of all rural pharmacies

over 1,800 independent community pharmacies operating as only retail pharmacy in their rural communities

# Independent Pharmacy Marketplace Realities

presented by PSAOs (Pharmacy Services Administrative organizations) for contracting—attempt to gain some negotiating power

ality: PSAOs are no match against the Big 3 PBMs

13 GAO Study (GAO 13-176): *“Over half of the PSAOs we spoke with reported little success in modifying certain contract terms as a result of negotiations. This may be due to PBMs use standard contract terms and the dominant market share of the largest PBMs. Many PBM contracts contain standard terms and conditions that are largely nonnegotiable.”*

Big 3 PBM Size/Power only increased since 2013

# PBM Marketplace

"Big Three" PBMs-Express Scripts, CVS Caremark and OptumRx control between 75-80 percent of the market

three companies are listed in top 22 of Fortune 500 and in 13 PBM revenues were estimated at more than \$250 Billion significant market consolidation; CVS Caremark merger; ESL-Edco; Optum-Catamaran

Big three PBMs are realistically the only choice for large plans  
PBMs contract with virtually every other entity in the drug supply chain—This data knowledge and sheer size = huge advantage

# PBM Influence in U.S. Supply Chain

Pharmaceutical manufacturers negotiate rebates with PBM formulary placement (ultimately determine what medications patients have access to AND at what cost share)

Pharmaceutical manufacturers contract with employers and health plans to administer their prescription drug benefit and in doing so, heavily influence Rx benefit design—with no PBM fiduciary obligation

Pharmaceutical manufacturers own mail order pharmacies and mail order specialty pharmacies that directly compete with retail pharmacies (PBMs also determine what competing retail pharmacies are reimbursed and what they may charge beneficiaries)

# Pharmacy Benefit Managers, Plan Benefit Design and Lack of Fiduciary Responsibility

Employers rely on PBMs to help them navigate drug pricing and plan benefit design

PBMs consistently take the position that they are not ERISA fiduciaries and very often contract away any fiduciary responsibility

As a result, PBMs typically have no obligation to disclose any/all of their revenue streams OR that certain plan benefit designs may increase PBM profits perhaps at the expense of the plan sponsor

PBMs were required to disclose these potential conflicts of interest, and plan sponsors may make different economic decisions or be better equipped to drive a harder bargain

# PBM Revenue Streams

Revenue stream(s) derived from every supply chain participant

- Manufacturer rebates—what is a rebate?-access rebates vs. performance rebates—rebate “relabeling”)
- “Spread” profits—amount paid to pharmacy—different than amount charged to plan/employer on each prescription filled—not necessarily disclosed to plan
- Mail order/specialty pharmacies
- Prescriptions filled by plan members are often sold to manufacturers/data repositories. PBM may receive up to \$.00 per script

# PBM Influence and Retail Pharmacy

Pharmacies contract with retail pharmacies to form pharmacy networks (network pharmacies compete with PBM mail order/specialty pharmacies)

CVS Health-combination of PBM plus 2<sup>nd</sup> largest retail pharmacy chain. PBM side of the business has direct access to sensitive records of pharmacies in direct competition with retail chain

Pharmacies determine pharmacy reimbursement amounts for drugs dispensed through insurance coverage



# Pharmacy Influence and Retail Pharmacy

Pharmacies audit retail pharmacies (have access to detailed financial information and drug purchasing records)

Pharmacies wield absolute control over pharmacy reimbursement for generics: Each PBM controls proprietary MAC lists—Brand name drugs have public benchmarks—These do not exist for generics.....

# MAC Pricing: PBM Proprietary Drug Pricing Standard

Maximum Allowable Cost (MAC) lists are created by PBMs that determine the maximum amount they will reimburse a pharmacy for a generic or multi-source product to transparency to pharmacy or plan sponsor on methodology (different MAC lists for different plan sponsors) or how lists will be updated. Also use of one MAC list for pharmacy reimbursement (low) and one for plan sponsor (high)—PBM profit on “spread”

Pharmacies sign contracts with virtually no information on generic pricing—only learn of reimbursement amount when claim is adjudicated (at point of sale)

# Pharmacy “DIR” Fees

Proactive reductions of pharmacy reimbursement often months after claim adjudication

Part D program treats discounts (AT point of sale) and copay (POST point of sale) differently for the purposes of the Part D bid. Financially advantageous for PBMs and plan sponsors to shift as much as possible to post point of sale

Problem: Cost sharing obligations (patient and federal govt. are based on “negotiated price” —the amount paid by PBM pharmacy at point of sale

Net ultimate price lowered after the point of sale—patient and government do not benefit!!

# Specialty Pharmacy

Specialty pharmacy/specialty drugs = typically very high price medications

Currently a PBM conflict of interest “flash point.”

M-owned specialty pharmacies have significant incentive capture these prescriptions

Increasing incidence of PBMs terminating or declining network applications of independent specialty pharmacies, posing excessive accreditation requirements and excessive audits

Ed. Judge in ESI-Medco merger raised concerns about specialty conflicts of interest.....

# Moving Forward.....

Current model dysfunctional with misaligned incentives  
Employers/payers searching for new models  
Direct contracting with pharmacies  
Outcomes based reimbursement  
Need for greater connectivity between Rx spend and  
Medical spend—using Rx to stave off costly downstream  
Medical intervention  
New interest in capitalizing on expertise of  
Pharmacists to stretch limited resources/services

**Rob Andrews**

**CEO**

**Health Transformation Alliance**

# Relationships and Competition in the Drug Channel System

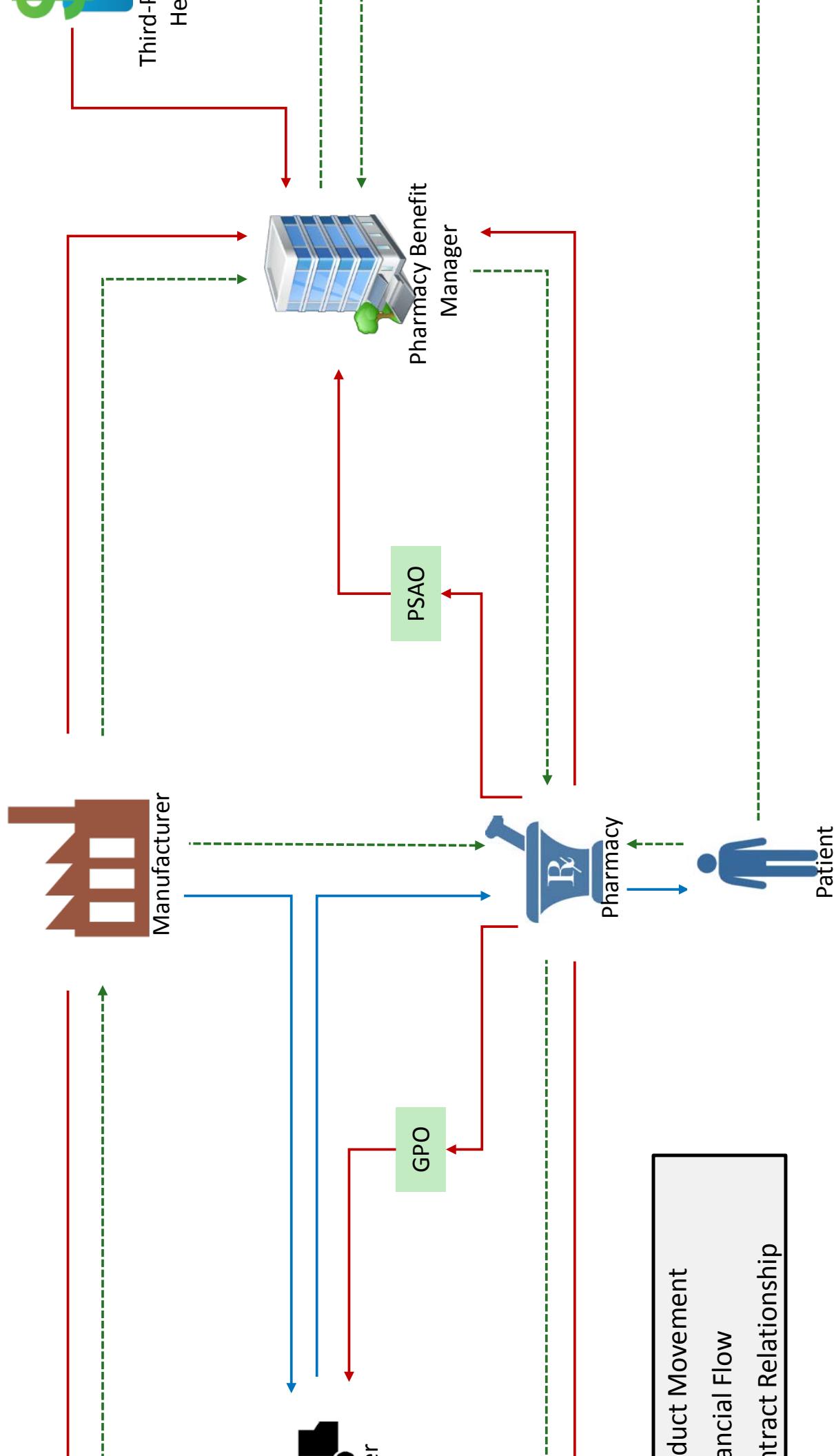
Adam J. Fein, Ph.D.  
[Pembroke Consulting, Inc.](http://PembrokeConsulting, Inc.)  
[www.DrugChannels.net](http://www.DrugChannels.net)  
[@DrugChannels](https://twitter.com/DrugChannels)

## Federal Trade Commission

Understanding Competition in Prescription Drug Markets: Entry and Supply Chain Dynamics  
November 8, 2017

The opinions and views expressed in this report are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the opinions or views of the organization to whom it is addressed.

# Distribution and Reimbursement System: Patient-Administered, Outpatient



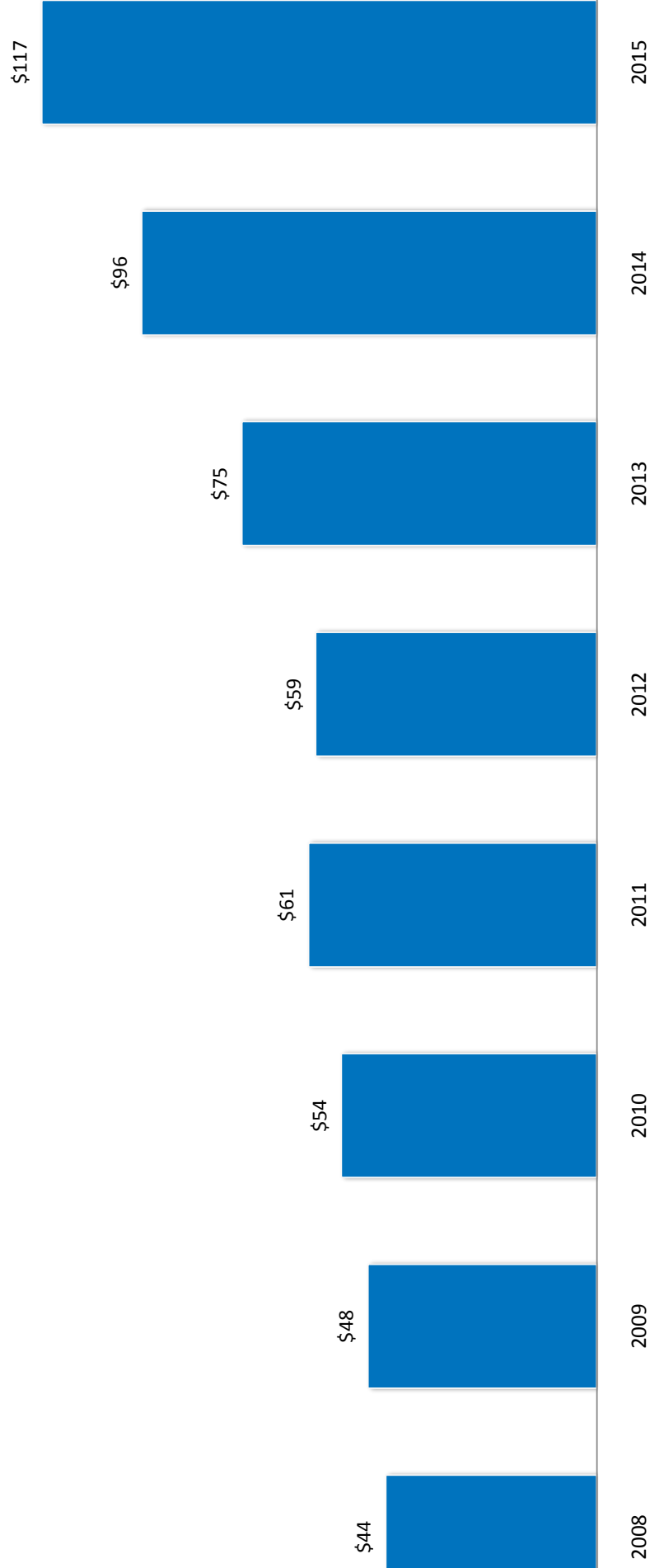
GPO = Group Purchasing Organization; PSAO = Pharmacy Services Administrative Organization

Source: [The 2017 Economic Report on U.S. Pharmacies and Pharmacy Benefit Managers](#); Drug Channels Institute, 2017. Chart illustrates flows for **Patient-Administered, Outpatient Name Drugs**. Please note that this chart is illustrative. It not intended to be a complete representation of every type of financial, product flow, or contractual relationship in the marketplace.

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# Value of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers' Off-Invoice Discounts, Rebates, & Concessions, 2007-2016



Pembroke Consulting analysis of Medicines Use and Spending in the U.S.: A Review of 2016 and Outlook to 2021, QuintilesIMS, May 2017  
[Show the Gross-to-Net Rebate Bubble Growing Even Bigger](#), Drug Channels, June 2017

# Understanding Competition in Prescription Drug Markets: Entry and Supply Chain Dynamics

**Panel 2: Understanding Intermediaries: Pharmacy Benefit Managers**

November 8, 2017

FEDERAL TRADE

# Lunch

# Understanding Competitive Prescription Drug Markets Entry and Supply Chain Dynamic

Panel 3: Understanding Intermediaries: Group Purchasing Organization

# Healthcare Group Purchasing Organizations (GPO)

## *Reducing Costs and Increasing Competition and Innovation in the Pharmaceutical Market*

Healthcare Supply Chain Association (HSCA)

Todd Ebert, R.Ph., President & CEO

November 8, 2017

# Interview: GPOs are Critical Sourcing and Cost-Savings Partners to Hospitals, Long-Term Care, Other Providers

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More than a century, healthcare group purchasing organizations (GPOs) have helped their healthcare provider partners **leverage purchasing volume to lower prices** on healthcare products and services, **which lowers costs for patients, hospitals, payers, Medicare and Medicaid, and taxpayer**

A GPO mission is focused on **reducing healthcare costs, increasing competition and innovation, and improving transparency**, and **improving healthcare processes and outcomes**.

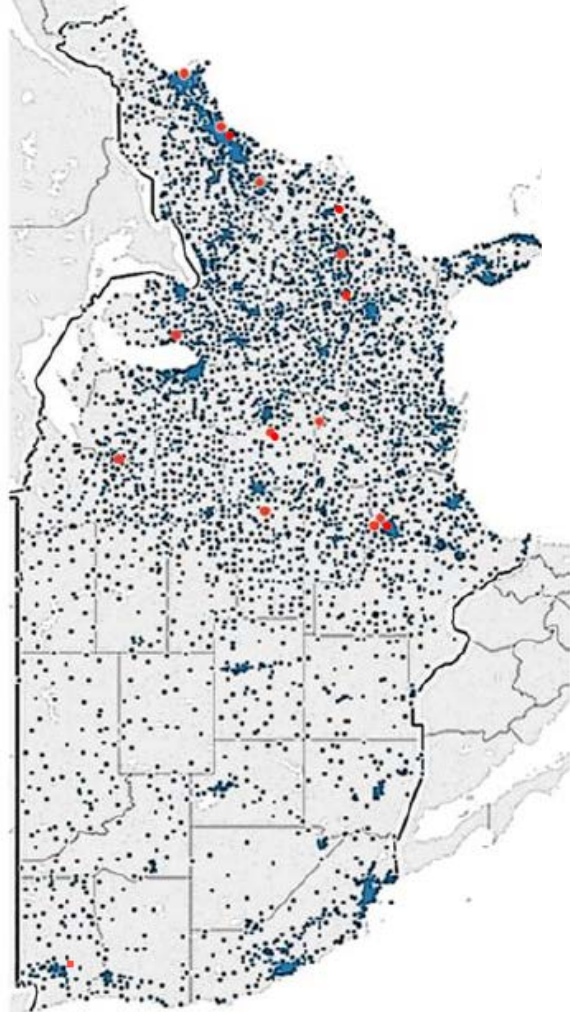
Typically **every hospital** and the vast majority of **non-acute care facilities** in the U.S. use a GPO. GPOs are **competitive** and GPO use is **completely voluntary** – providers can and do purchase off-organization. GPO use is **driven by value provided**.

GPO contract decisions are **made at the facility level**, with member input and support groups for all decisions. GPOs have processes in place to **identify innovative and breakthrough products** and help them to be adopted. The average GPO contract administrative fee is **1.22% to 2.25%**. (Source: US Government Accountability Office)

# A Glance: Virtually All Hospitals and the Vast Majority of Non-Acute Care Facilities Use a GPO

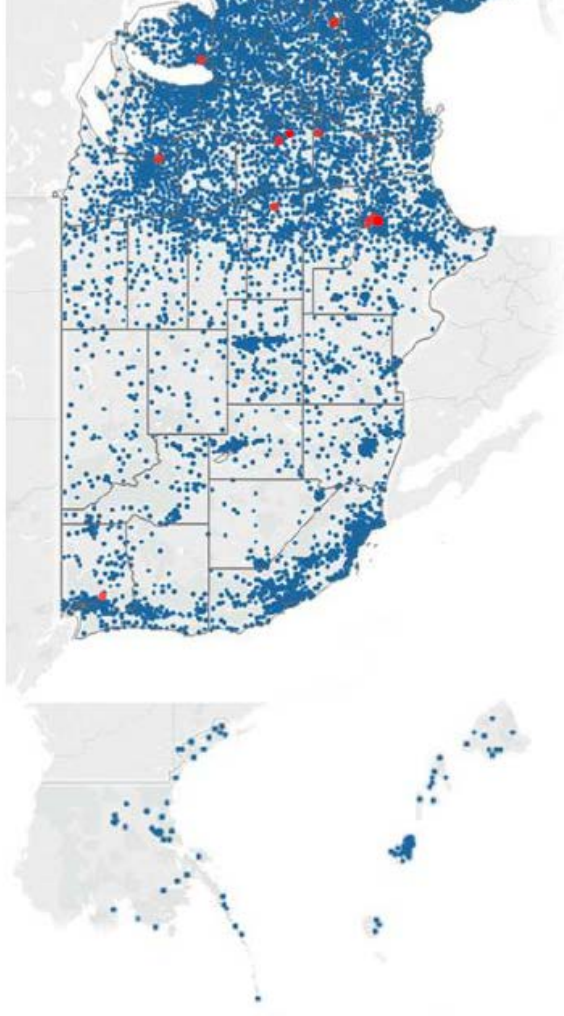
## The Healthcare Supply Chain:

Map of 7,000+ U.S. Acute Care Providers  
98% of all U.S. Hospitals Utilize a GPO



## The Healthcare Supply Chain:

Map of 68,000+ U.S. GPO-Member Non-Acute Care Providers  
Including long-term care providers, clinics, surgery centers, home health providers



● GPO Member Providers

● HSCA Member Headquarters

Andover, MA | Asheville, NC | Brentwood, TN

Charlotte, NC | Elkridge, MD | Irving, TX (2)

Middleville, MI | Mission, KS | New York, NY (2) | Plano, TX

St. Paul, MN | St. Louis, MO (2) | St. Paul, MN

# How GPOs Reduce Costs for Hospitals, Healthcare Providers, Medicare and Medicaid, and Taxpayers

A broad range of empirical and academic research finds that GPOs reduce the total purchasing costs for healthcare providers:

Providers realize savings of 10% to 18% by using GPOs; these savings are likely to be especially valuable to smaller, rural hospitals; and providers pass these savings onto patients and ultimately to taxpayers. (Kane, O'Brien, 2017)

Providers save the U.S. healthcare system up to \$55 billion annually, up to \$864.4 billion in total savings over the next 10 years, and up to \$229 billion in Medicare- and \$169 billion in Medicaid savings over the same period. (Dobson DaVanzo, 2014)

Approximately 90% of hospitals are satisfied with their GPO, and 88% agree that GPOs reduce costs. (American Hospital Association, Association for Healthcare Resources Management, Wharton School, 2014)

Providers save the U.S. health care industry \$36 billion dollars annually and create an annual \$2 billion in annual savings associated with human resources management committed to the purchasing process, according to a study of 400+ hospitals. (Kane, 2009)

Contract administrative fees have no effect on the total purchasing costs of any hospital. (Purdue University, Krannert School of Management, 2011)

## GPO U.S. COST SAVINGS

Up to **\$55 billion** annually

Up to **\$864 billion** over the next 10 years

Up to **\$229 billion** in Medicare savings and **\$169 billion** in Medicaid savings over 10 years

**\$2 billion** in annual savings associated with human resource cost management

**10%-18%** average savings



# Former FTC Chair Jon Leibowitz and Deputy Director Dan O'Brien Affirm GPO Cost Savings, Competition

2017, Former FTC Chair Jon Leibowitz and former FTC Deputy Director of the Bureau of Economic Analysis, Dan O'Brien conducted a comprehensive economic and legal analysis of the role, business model and impact of GPOs and found that:

GPOs **save money** for healthcare providers, patients and taxpayers.

GPOs operate in a **vigorously competitive** procurement market.

The current GPO vendor funding model is **consistent with competition and cost savings**.

Changing the GPO vendor funding model **would likely increase costs**.

“We find no empirical, economic policy basis for forcing GPOs to shift to an alternate funding mechanism.”

- Leibowitz, O'Brien, Anello, 2017.

# GPOs Operate in a Highly Competitive Market

---

2017 Leibowitz/O'Brien study found that GPOs **operate in a highly competitive market**. Specific conclusions about the competitive nature of the GPO market included **more than 100 national, regional and local GPOs and regional cooperatives compete with each other** to provide GPO services;

The GPO market operates with a level of competition equivalent to an unconcentrated market with **more than 10 independent competitors** of equal size;

Providers can **choose from multiple GPOs** and also can, and commonly do, **use multiple GPOs simultaneously**. On average, providers use between 2-3 GPOs;

Providers often control their own GPO, which creates **strong incentives to offer competitive pricing**;

Providers can **purchase from a competing GPO or procure supplies directly from vendors**;

Research competition suggests that the vendor-fee model is **more efficient than other models**.

# GPO Safe Harbor, Model, and Oversight

---

... included the **GPO Safe Harbor** in its **Medicare and Medicaid Patient Protection Act of 1987** to promote cost-savings and efficiencies realized through lawful GPO practices.\* The provision did not initiate any new business practices, it merely clarified that existing GPO business practices were lawful:

## Limit to the GPO Safe Harbor:

... have **written contract** with each member;  
... disclose that an administrative fee is collected, and **any fee above 3% must be specifically identified in the contract**;  
... **report annually** to members on all administrative fees collected from GPO contract use;  
... **make all fee information available** at the request of the Secretary of Health and Human Services;  
... hospitals must **report GPO fee distributions as part of their annual cost reports** and GPOs encourage hospitals to ensure that their cost reports **fully and accurately** reflect fee information in these reports.

## Business model and oversight:

- **GPO Safe Harbor not unusual** – 1 of 23 provisions in 1988 addressing a range of lawful business practices;
- **Vendor funding model likely reduces transaction costs** as neither empirical evidence nor economic theory suggest that vendor fees raise prices;
- Industries leveraging group buying/vendor fee model include **government procurement (DOD, VA), food service, online marketplaces (Amazon, eBay, Living Social), consumer electronics, hospitality and non-profit industries;**
- GPO model and business practices thoroughly reviewed by **GAO, DOJ, U.S. Supreme Court, 8th Circuit Court of Appeals, academia, and hospitals**, and all have concluded that no change is needed.

\* ... Herrmann, "Activities and Perspectives of the Office of the Inspector General in the Department of Health and Human Services Regarding Group Purchasing Organizations (GPOs)," 2013.

# GPOs are Most Transparent Sector in Healthcare

---

**Healthcare Group Purchasing Industry Initiative (HGPII)** is an independent, voluntary organization led by the chief executives of healthcare GPOs who believed industry **should collectively demonstrate a strong commitment to transparency and ethical values**. HGPII promotes the development of transparency and accountability standards and ethical business practices, and all members are also members of HGPII.

Members submit to **annual independent review** of business practices; comprehensive industry reviews conducted by former **U.S. Representative Phil English (R-PA)** and former **U.S. Senator Byron Dorgan (D-ND)**; participating GPOs consistently found to have **met or exceeded** **an ethical standards and business practices** that **promote innovation, transparency** in bidding process, and **compliance**;

- Every HGPII member actively promulgates a **code of conduct** to ban conflicts of interest;
- GPOs offer an **independent grievance procedure** to suppliers through the American Arbitration Association;
- All **GPO contracts are voluntary** and the process is **of competitive market negotiations**.

# Steps Taking Steps to Eliminate Drug Price Spikes &

## Shortages

for critical generic drugs and ongoing prescription drug shortages continue to jeopardize patient access to care. **Healthcare GPOs are working vigorously with regulators, providers, manufacturers and distributors** to ensure a safe and reliable supply of product, and are **taking a number of innovative steps to help increase competition in the market, avoid generic drug price spikes, and eliminate prescription drug shortages**, including:

• Policy advocacy to increase competition (e.g., expedited FDA review, closing REMS loophole, generics, generics, etc.)

• Supplier price adjustments to contracts to reflect market conditions (e.g., raw materials shortages)

• Data tracking to anticipate shortages

• Work with suppliers and providers to understand supply issues, and to identify alternative suppliers and products as appropriate

- Manufacturer reliability evaluation
- Increased supplier-provider communication
- Identification of additional manufacturers to help bring products in shortage and help bringing the market
- Migration to alternative products where available
- Failure-to-supply clauses to ensure that suppliers meet contract requirements

# How We're Evolving and Expanding Offerings to Help Providers Confront New Challenges

---

We're using data more efficiently and effectively driving cost-savings required complementary services, and we've **evolved and expanded their offerings** to better **meet member needs**, including:

- Data analysis and benchmarking
- Market research
- Innovative technology integration
- Infection control
- Electronic product tracking
- Developing communities of knowledge to share best practices

The healthcare industry is complicated, fast-moving, and dependent on a wide range of external dynamics. GPOs are **on the front line of helping providers successfully confront trends and challenges**, including:

- Emergency preparedness & natural disaster response
- Patient safety and improved patient outcomes
- Energy management
- Drug utilization management
- Value-based purchasing

# Role of Wholesalers/Distributors in Pharmaceutical Supply Chain

Deliver drugs, medical supplies and durable medical equipment from pharmaceutical manufacturers to downstream purchasers such as pharmacies, hospitals, long-term care facilities and clinics

Conduit for medicines to travel from manufacturer to patient

Over 93% of pharmaceuticals in the U.S. flow through primary distributors

# The U.S. Pharmacy Distribution and Reimbursement System for Patient-Administered, Outpatient Prescription Drugs

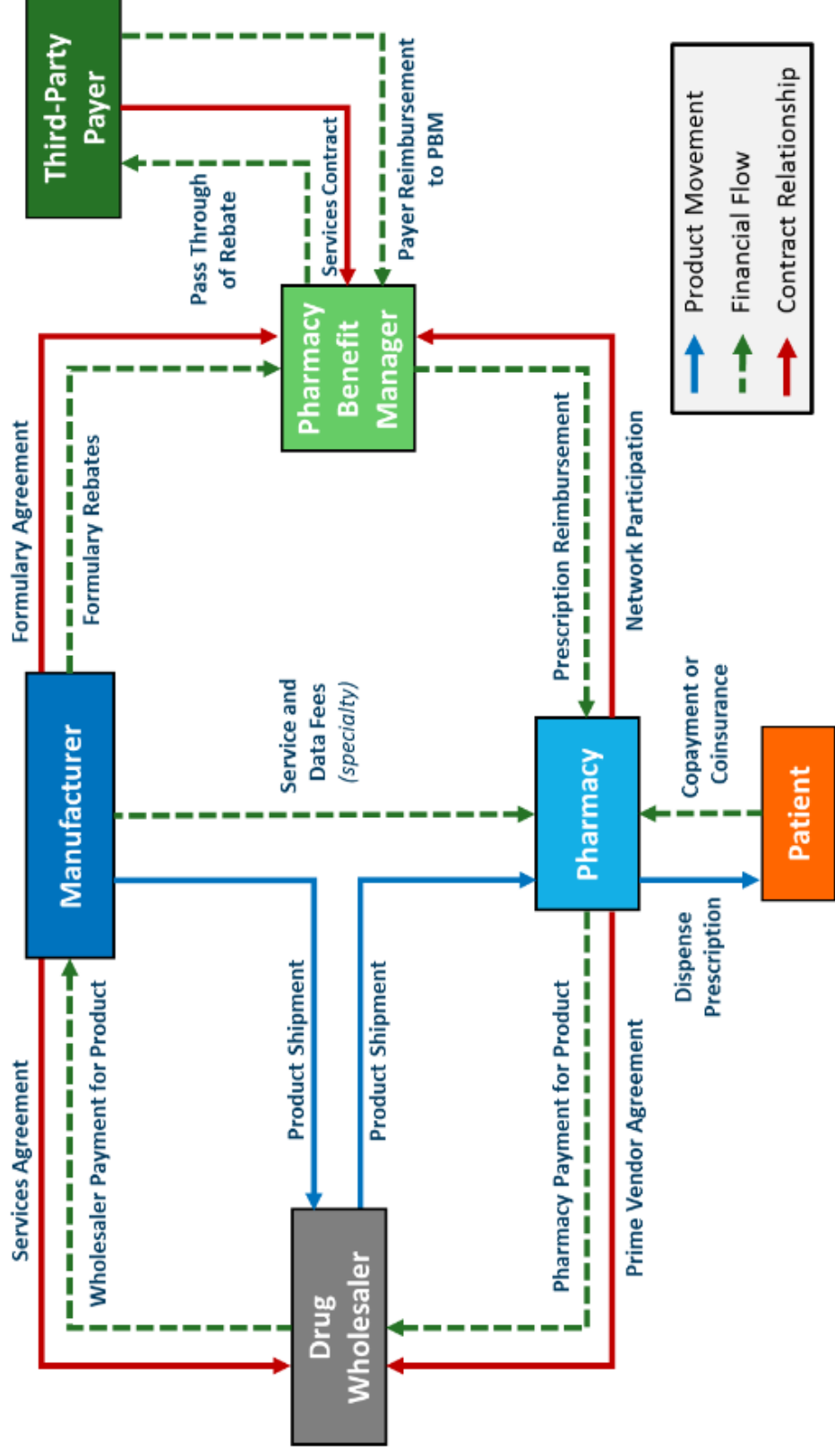


Chart illustrates flows for patient-administered, outpatient drugs. Please note that this chart is illustrative. It is not intended to be a complete representation of every type of financial, product flow, or contractual relationship in the marketplace.

Source: Fein, Adam. J., *The 2016 Economic Report on Retail, Mail and Specialty Pharmacies*, Drug Channels Institute, January 2016. (Available at [http://drugchannelsinstitute.com/products/industry\\_report/pharmacy/](http://drugchannelsinstitute.com/products/industry_report/pharmacy/))



# Role of Wholesalers/Distributors in Pharmaceutical Supply Chain

Focus significant resources on the safety and security of the supply chain

- Secure supply chain efforts may be most important service distributors provide to overall pharmaceutical delivery system
- Healthcare Distribution Alliance (HDA) integral to passage of Drug Supply Chain Security Act (DSCSA)

“One stop” ordering for all drugs/medical supply needs

Allows providers to have “just in time” drug inventories

# Distributor/Wholesaler Services & Compensation

Distributors provide a variety of services to pharmaceutical manufacturers and their downstream customers

- Receiving orders & shipping products in a safe and efficient manner
- Inventory management
- Reporting as to where manufacturer products are utilized
- Chargeback management related to direct agreements between manufacturers and downstream customers/GPOs and for government programs like the VA/FSS program and the 340B program

# Distributor/Wholesaler Services & Compensation

## Bona Fide Service Fees

- Itemized services provided to manufacturers
- Manufacturers would otherwise perform/contract for in the absence of the arrangement
- Fair Market Value
- Not passed on in whole or in part to downstream customers

Fees tend to be itemized per service rather than one aggregated amount and percentage of Wholesale Acquisition Cost (WAC)-base

# Distributor/Wholesaler Services & Compensation

Distributors do not profit from manufacturer WAC increases for existing inventory

Most distributor agreements with manufacturers mandate price appreciation credits be provided to the manufacturer when the manufacturer increases WAC for a product related to the distributor's existing inventory for such product

Service-fee model not arbitrage model of compensation/profitability

# Role of Wholesalers/Distributors in Drug Pricing

For branded products, purchase at WAC and sell to downstream customers at WAC

Manufacturers set the WAC prices for their products; wholesalers are not privy to how such WAC pricing decisions are made

- WAC is the “list price” and does not include rebates, discounts or adjustments from proprietary negotiations between manufacturers and distributors, GPO or other customers
- WAC is published in various compendia including Medi-Span and First DataBank

# Role of Wholesalers/Distributors in Drug Pricing

Generics drug pricing is more complicated; generics are commodities

Distributors may sell generic drugs to downstream customers based on WAC or they may price generic drugs to downstream customers in response to the market considering-

- Supply of competing generic drugs
- WACs for the competing generic drugs

# Generic Sourcing Programs

Distributors may offer generic sourcing programs/pricing to some customers

Negotiate with generic drug manufacturers to purchase all requirements for certain classes of generic solely from manufacturer in exchange for discounts/rebates

May provide some or all of the discounts/rebates to downstream customers in exchange for exclusivity or volume commitments related to generics

# Intersection of Distributors & GPOs

Distributors do not typically have direct agreements with GPOs

Manufacturers may have agreements with GPOs to sell certain drugs  
products to GPO members at a discount; may have purchasing and  
volume commitments

GPO members still acquire drugs through distributors and  
distributors process chargebacks to manufacturers for the difference  
between WAC and the Member's discounted price of a drug under  
the manufacturer/GPO agreement



# Intersection of Distributors & Pharmacies

## Joint Ventures/Buying Groups

- Walgreens Alliance Boots/AmeriSourceBergen
- McKesson/Wal-Mart
- Cardinal/CVS

Exclusivity/volume commitments on generic drugs and substantial discounts on generics for the purchasing pharmacies

# Medication Access — Perspective from a Purchaser

Erin R. Fox, PharmD, BCPS, FASHP



# DISCLOSURE

This presentation represents my own opinions

University of Utah Drug Information Service receives funding from Vizient (a GPO) to provide drug shortage content

University of Utah Health is Vizient member

# CHALLENGES FROM A PURCHASER'S PERSPECTIVE

Drug shortages

Few choices due to sole source products

No transparency to make good choices

What is the price?

# DRUG SHORTAGES OF ESSENTIAL PRODUCTS

Hospitals struggle to purchase basics

- Mainly generic injectables

Shortage definition: a supply problem that

- Changes preparation
- Requires prescribers to use an alternative
- Delays therapy
- Results in patients going without treatment

Mayo Clinic Proc. 2014;89(3):361-373

# WHAT HAPPENS DURING A SHORTAGE?

Pharmacists find alternatives

Patients prioritized, care is rationed

Huge labor costs to change electronic medication records, switch products in automation

Medication errors

Patient harm

# INCREASED LABOR

Lose entire supply with a single recall

Switching to IV push due to minibag shortage required review and changes to 700 electronic treatment plans (for just 2 drugs)



Photo credit: Erin Fox

Kaakeh R et al. AJHP. 2011;68:

# FRAGILE SUPPLY CHAIN

Poor quality, manufacturing problems, delays

Few suppliers

- More than 1/3 of products have just 1 or 2 suppliers

Limited capacity

- No redundancy or back up plans
- Concentrated, just in time production (24/7)

Business drives decisions (profits, costs to fix, prioritizing new opportunities, <https://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-176>)

Clin Pharmacol Ther. 2013;93:170–176



# POOR QUALITY LEADS TO HARM

Warning letter (2011) to key supplier of critical electrolytes outlined years of deficiencies

Calcium

Phosphates

Trace elements

**Zinc**

**– Shortage = dermatologic adverse events for premature infants**



**Zinc shortage - 2012**

Photo/S.A. Norton, Children's

MMWR. February 22, 2013;136-

© UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

Medical Center

# SOLE SOURCE / NEAR SOLE SOURCE PRODUCTION

Single firm often produces 90% of total supply – common to have sole source raw materials

What limits competition and new entrants?

- Low use products
- Practice changes
- Approval backlog?

Are FDA recommendations / public health considered during mergers?

Are essential medications critical infrastructure?

- Cancelled surgeries

# SOLE SOURCE PRODUCTS

Single firm often produces 90% of total supply –  
common to have sole source raw materials

What limits competition and new entrants?

- Low use products
- Practice changes
- Approval backlog?

Are FDA recommendations / public health  
considered during mergers?

Are essential medications critical infrastructure?

- Cancelled surgeries

<https://www.blumenthal.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Letter%20to%20FTC%20on%20Pfizer%20Drug%20Short>

# DO YOU PURCHASE FOR QUALITY?

- FDA makes warning letters and 483 inspections public, but names of drugs are redacted
- No requirement to disclose which company actually makes a product, or manufacturing site
- Purchasers can't follow the data to spend their limited dollars wisely
- FDA Quality Metrics program is voluntary, not public
- Few data available for higher risk 503b compounders

<https://www.fda.gov/downloads/drugs/guidances/ucr>

# WHAT IS THE PRICE?

It depends....

- AWP (average wholesaler price)
- WAC (wholesale acquisition cost)
- ASP (average sales price)
- AMP (average manufacturer price)
- MAC (maximum allowable cost)
- 340B
- GPO (group purchasing organization)
- Contract

# TAKEAWAYS

Shortages mean hospitals don't have critical medications needed for patient care

Purchasers have few choices due to sole suppliers and consolidation

Quality problems are concerning, but not transparent

Drug pricing is complicated

# Conflict of Interests: Does GPO Compensation Lead to Higher Drug Prices?

Hal J. Singer

FTC Prescription Drug Market  
Competition Workshop

Nov. 8, 2017

# Original Research

“The Budgetary Impact of Eliminating the GPOs’ Safe Harbor,” (2006) (funded by MDMA)

“Broken Compensation Structures and Health Care Costs,” Harv. Bus. Rev. (2010)

“Assessing Bundling and Share-Based Loyalty Rebates: Applications in the Pharmaceutical Industry, J. Comp. L. & Econ. (2012) (with Kevin Caves)

“An Empirical Analysis of Aftermarket Transactions by Hospitals,” 28 J. Contemp. Health L. & Pol’y 23 (2012) (with Robert Litan & Anna Birkenbach)



# Irrelevant (and Irrelevant) Question

Relevant Q: Would a change in the GPO *compensation structure* lead to lower supply costs for member hospitals?

- Compensation is from suppliers, not their member hospitals
- GPOs enjoy exemption to the anti-kickback statute of the Social Security Act, which makes it illegal to receive any compensation from suppliers for items reimbursable by federal health care programs.
- Theory of harm in RTI v Becton Dickinson (E.D. Tex 2003)

Irrelevant Q: Do GPOs reduce health care prices relative to a world without GPOs?

- In theory (though not proven), GPOs lower prices relative to individual negotiations by hospitals to (1) bargaining power and (2) transactions costs

Two questions blur only if you believe there is no alternative to current compensation structure

- GAO (2014): Hospital consolidation + use of aftermarket subscription services suggest GPOs would survive
- GPOs survived for ~80 years without supplier-side funding

# Monopoly Concessions in Other Industries

Municipalities grant concessions to cable service providers, funded by franchise fees

- DOJ (2007-08) recognized conflict of interests; sent *ex parte* letter to FCC, sent letters to nine states considering statewide franchising legislation, and issued a report on video competition

Prisons grant concessions to single provider of long distance service, funded by “site commissions” (aka kickbacks)

- Average cost of 15-minute call in states (37) that allow kickbacks: \$2.40
- Average cost of 15-minute call in states (14) that don't allow kickbacks: \$1.58
- Source: [www.prisonphonejustice.org](http://www.prisonphonejustice.org)

# Testimonials

Healthcare Matters Principal Editor Thomas Finn: “As a member-driven enterprise, it is common knowledge that Premier [the second largest GPO] and other **GPOs** ‘**back**’ with their members and owners. In fact, many hospital executives who are part of the Premier alliance have learned to rely on that share back as an integral part of their annual compensation.”

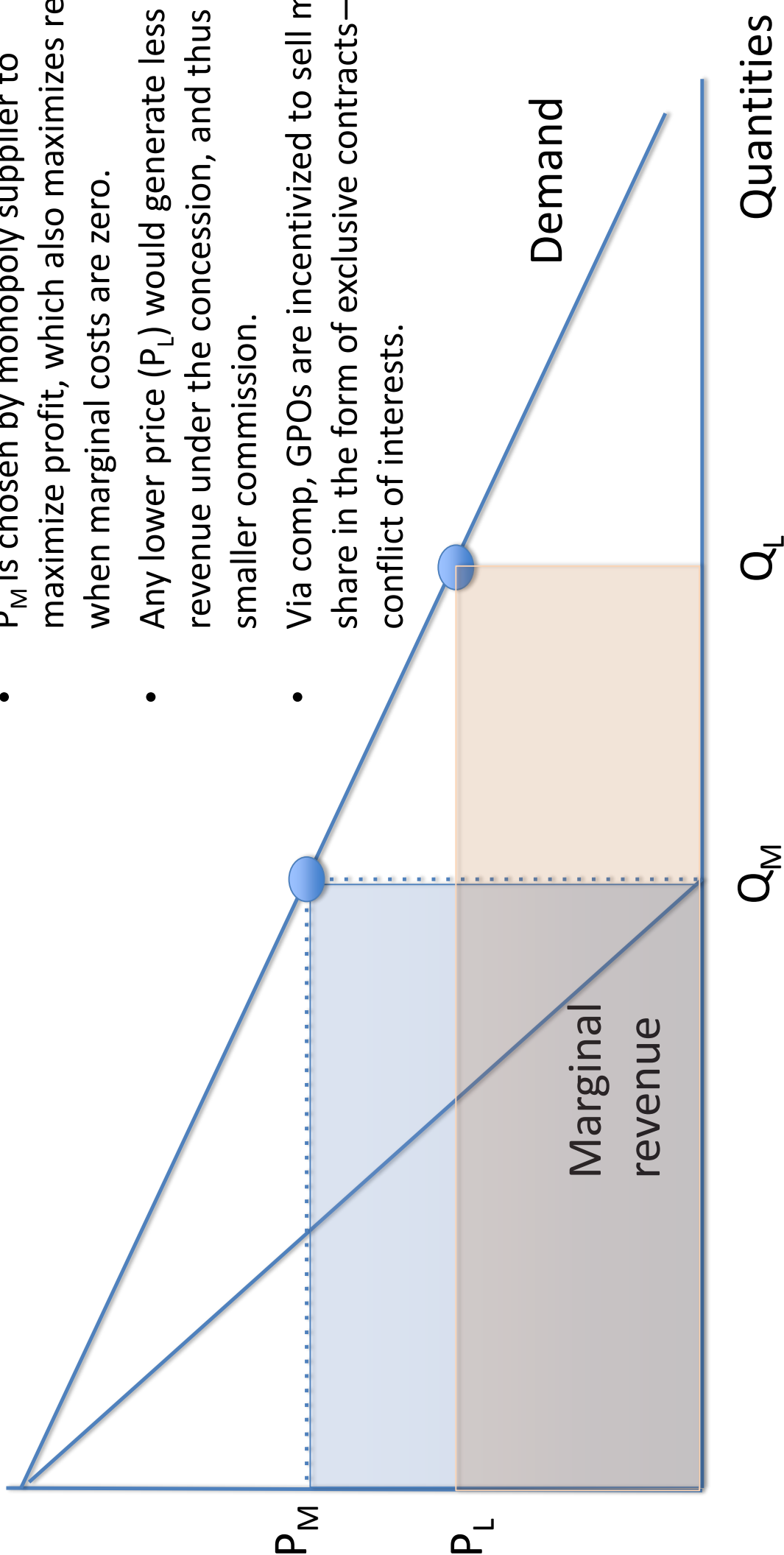
— Healthcare Matters, July 22, 2013

Asst. Secretary of HHS Koh under President Obama: “First of all, these agreements were made often through these long-term contracts and so also this whole process involves multiple stake-holders, especially and including the pharmacy benefit managers and the **group purchasing organizations**. So it complicates this environment and sort of does not make relevant the sort of standard supply and demand economic principles that we see in other businesses.”

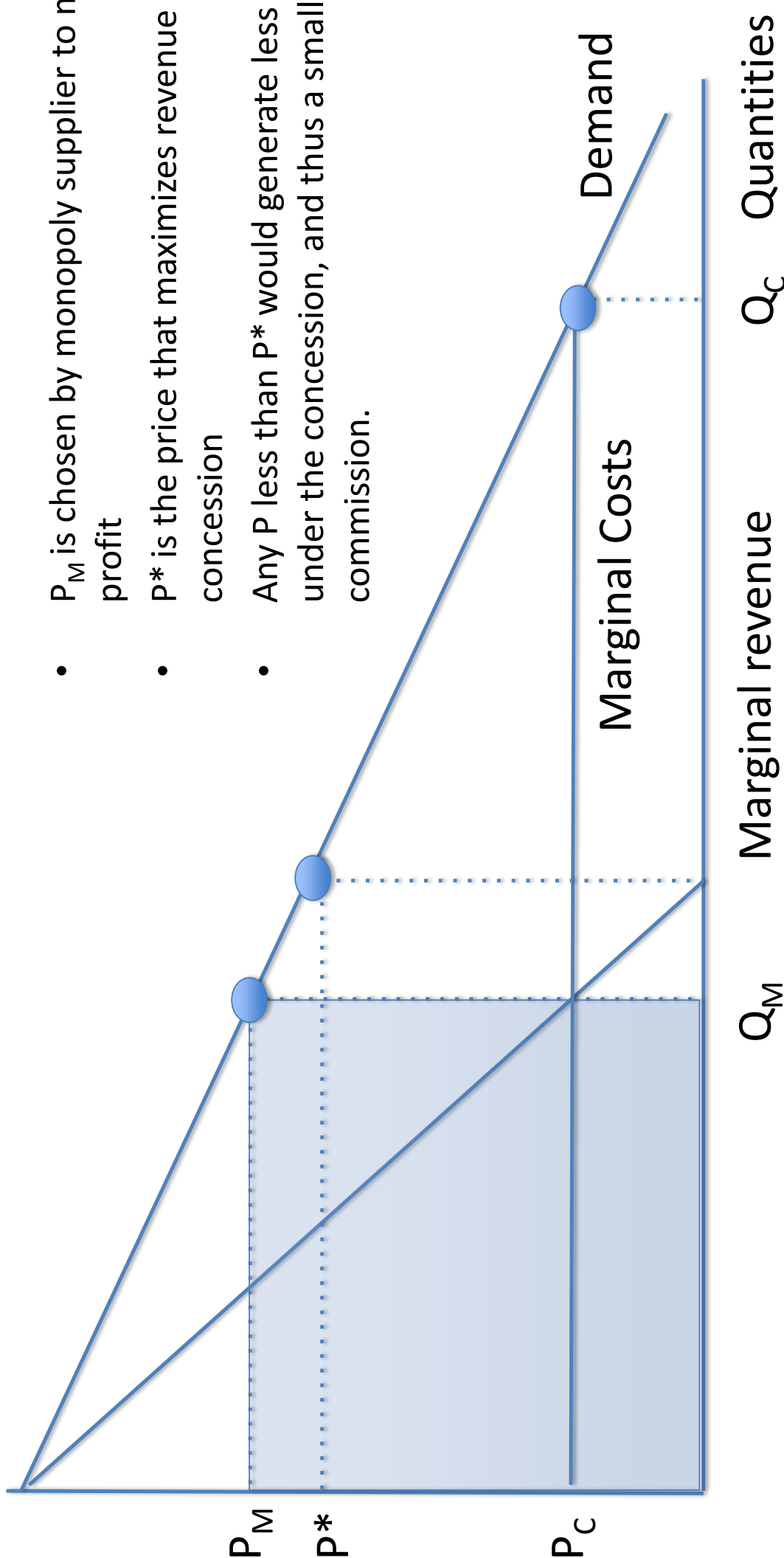
— Testimony before the September 23, 2011 House Energy & Commerce Committee

# Buying Agent Is Compensated by a Fixed Percent of Revenues from Suppliers and Marginal Costs Are Zero, Best to Grant a Monopoly

- $P_M$  is chosen by monopoly supplier to maximize profit, which also maximizes revenue when marginal costs are zero.
- Any lower price ( $P_L$ ) would generate less revenue under the concession, and thus smaller commission.
- Via comp, GPOs are incentivized to sell more share in the form of exclusive contracts—conflict of interests.



# When Marginal Costs Are Positive, Best to Avoid Competitive Rates



# Key Findings of Litan, Singer & Birkenbach (2011)

When brokered by an agent **not compensated by suppliers**, hospitals enjoy an average price reduction of 10-14% from 2001 through 2010

- Each additional rival bid dropped price significantly
- Incumbent dropping its own bid decreased auction price significantly
- Anecdotal evidence (e.g., Masimo/pulse oximeters) where price effect from **entry** is much larger

Implication: Consistent with claim that, due to incentive distortion, GPOs are not securing competitive price for their hospital members

# Other Potential Harms of Funding

## Mechanism

Compared to direct payment of rebates by manufacturers, lump-sum payments of rebates from GPOs is less commonly credited by hospitals to individual medical device purchases on their cost reports to government

GAO (2014) at 21: “To the extent that administrative fee revenue is not reflected on cost reports, Medicare could be overpaying hospitals.”

# Criticisms: Johnston & Rooney (2012)

Large, high-value products are not representative of all products purchased by GPOs (at 83); aftermarket purchases are more “infinite” (at 83), exhibit greater “commitment” (at 84)

Caveat our findings by saying that apply to these types of purchases, which account for 20% of all GPO purchase; also, 20% is not a small sample;

No reason that a kickback regime would inflate the cost of high-value products not low-value products; economic incentives are to maximize revenue regardless of product type

While there may be uncertainty over units purchased by *single* hospital pursuant to a GPO contract, purchases across *all* hospitals within GPOs are more certain

**see appendix for more rejoinders**



# Criticisms: O'Brien, Leibowitz & Anello (2017)

dings do not suggest price differential can be attributed to GPO funding  
del (at 6)

But to what other feature of GPOs could the price differential be attributed?

Subscription-based aftermarket services are a reasonable proxy for outcomes with an  
alternative funding mechanism

cause tax incidence is neutral with respect to where tax is levied, funding  
source doesn't matter (at 9)

Not applicable because tax revenues to be collected in econ textbooks are assumed to be  
*exogenous*; in case of GPOs, fees collected under the concession are *endogenous*—that  
they depend on the number of suppliers, which is within the GPO's domain

If the funding model doesn't matter, then why do they care enough to hire consultants  
it the same way?

e appendix for more rejoinders

# Do These “Incentive Distortions” Apply to Prescription Drugs?

In one sense, prescription drugs are more differentiated than devices, which suggests GPOs are not needed to maintain pricing power

But there are still ways in which a GPO could put upward pressure on drug prices

- Brokering a bundled contract to prevent entry on “tied” product
- Agreeing to stock only one Hep C drug in hospital pharmacy, limiting brand-to-brand competition
- Sole-source contracts for generic drugs means major drug makers that don’t get contracts may and have discontinued production; when shortages hit, the price increases have been astronomical

A hospital might be able to get by with an inferior medical device, as long as they have one, but they can’t get by without a lifesaving generic injectable drug if it is in short supply and there is no acceptable substitute

# Price Effects

Bundling brokered by Physician Buying Groups shown to inflate price of pediatric vaccines

- To induce Sanofi purchasers to switch to Novartis' Menveo vaccine, Novartis would have to pay a negative price (i.e., compensate the physician practice) for losing the bundle discount (Caves & Singer 2012)

## Anecdotal evidence from Physicians Against Drug Shortages (PADS)

- “One member who practices at a surgicenter that does NOT buy through GPO contracts reports that his facility currently pays \$22 for a 10-vial box of propofol, compared with \$55 at another member's GPO-affiliated surgicenter.”
- “Another PADS member found that she could have purchased over-the-counter supplies such as Advil, bandages, and cotton balls, from Costco for up to 50% less than what her health system was paying through its GPO contracts, but her superiors wouldn't allow her to do so.”

# Output Effects

GPO contracting practices have been blamed for drug shortages  
GPO's tax on drug makers could lead to smaller inventories or discontin-  
production of some drugs, particular for **low-margin generics** (Moss 20  
Kweder & Dill 2013; Schweitzer 2013; FDA 2011; House of Reps. 2012)  
After reviewing literature and interviewing industry participants, GAO  
identified GPOs as one of three “underlying causes” in drug shortage (G  
Feb. 2014)

- Other causes include competition based primarily on price (interwoven with GP and change in Medicare Part B reimbursement policy
- Med Part B alt hypothesis discredited by former HHS Secretary Glied (2014) (explaining that the change in the reimbursement formula has never regulated either the level of prices paid to manufacturers or the flexibility of those prices)

# Conclusions

Removing exemption to the anti-kickback provision would benefit health care consumers by:

- Lowering drug (and medical device) prices
- Reducing entry barriers/fostering greater innovation in medical supply industries
- Alleviating drug shortages

# Appendix

# Criticisms: Johnston & Rooney (2012)

... prescription would benefit the medical device industry (at 73)

But fixing perverse incentives would engender more competition for the GPO contract, eroding margins in upstream industrial device industry not uniformly impacted: Status quo favors incumbents (Advamed), penalizes entrants (MDMA)

... ending would result in higher net outlays for hospitals (at 75)

Only true if the requisite administrative fees exceed the hidden costs that manifest in the form of inflated supply prices

... or all of the fees are returned to the hospitals via distributions (at 82)

But fees (around 2% of price) likely do not compensate for the overcharges on the underlying products (> 10 %)

GPOs distribute only 70% of total revenue to members (GAO 2014)

And even if they did, distributions to equity members do not compensate non-equity members

... , high-value products are not representative of all products purchased by GPOs (at 83); aftermarket products are more “definite” (at 83), exhibit greater “commitment” (at 84)

Caveat our findings by saying that apply to these types of purchases, which account for 20% of all GPO purchase; also, 20% is a small sample;

No reason that a kickback regime would inflate the cost of high-value products but not low-value products; economic incentives maximize revenue regardless of product type

While there may be uncertainty over units purchased by *single* hospital pursuant to GPO contract, purchases across *all* hospitals GPOs are more certain

# Criticisms: O'Brien, Leibowitz & Anello (2017)

Member ownership ensures GPO acts in hospitals' best interest (at 6)

Economists recognize agency problems (small stakes, information asymmetry); they aren't eliminated by vertical integration  
GPO administrators' compensation is funded via hospital *expenditures*, not savings

Ability to seek lower prices outside GPO ensures GPO act in hospitals' best interests (at 6)

Presumes that hospitals easily observe competitive prices for similar products; yet no such transparency exists  
Given that government reimburses hospitals for many purchases, hospital lacks strong incentive to identify savings  
Hospital forgoes bundled or volume discounts by purchasing outside of its GPO contract  
It would be difficult for a GPO entrant to lure hospitals by claiming that subscription fees are "better than free"  
Some GPO contracts with member hospitals also require GPO exclusivity

Findings do not suggest price differential can be attributed to GPO funding model (at 6)

Fair, but to what other feature of GPOs could the price differential be attributed?

Subscription-based aftermarket services are a reasonable proxy for outcomes with an alternative funding mechanism

Issue tax incidence is neutral with respect to where tax is levied, funding doesn't matter (at 9)

Not applicable because tax revenues to be collected are assumed to be *exogenous*; in case of GPOs, fees collected under the concession are *endogenous*—that is, they depend on the number of suppliers, which is within the GPO's domain  
If the funding model doesn't matter, then why do they care enough to hire consultants to keep it the same way?



# Criticisms: O'Brien, Leibowitz & Anello (2017)

jecting fees from 2,500 vendors is more efficient than doing so from 103,000 hospitals (at 10)

Incremental costs of accommodating your 2,501<sup>st</sup> client is effectively zero; that is, same system that could accommodate 2, clients could likely accommodate 103,000 clients

ndor fees were barred, GPOs would replace with sales-based fees from hospitals (at 11)

No basis to assume sales-based fees, when flat-price subscription fees for aftermarket auctions already exist in the market

ndor-paid fees are common; used by Amazon, eBay and credit cards (at 11)

But you don't have the same principal-agent problem. And Amazon users are shopping with better information, myriad choices. Credit card example is inapposite. Amex receives a % of revenue paid to merchants, but it is not involved in negotiating prices on behalf of the merchants in its network.

literature doesn't support idea that sales-based payments are conducive to exclusion (at 12)

Literature shows that buyers do not need payments to abide by exclusivity provisions, so long as the "penalty price" for non-compliance is set sufficiently high. Thus, the form of the payments (flat or proportional to sales) is irrelevant.

Payment in this case is to an agent (GPO), not to the buyer (hospital), which can facilitate the exclusion.

ct rebates from vendors raise same concern because buyer may fail to those report too (at 12)

False. Rebate from a supplier would be easier to trace back to a particular purchase (for reporting purposes) than would a purchase distribution from a GPO.

**Trend**

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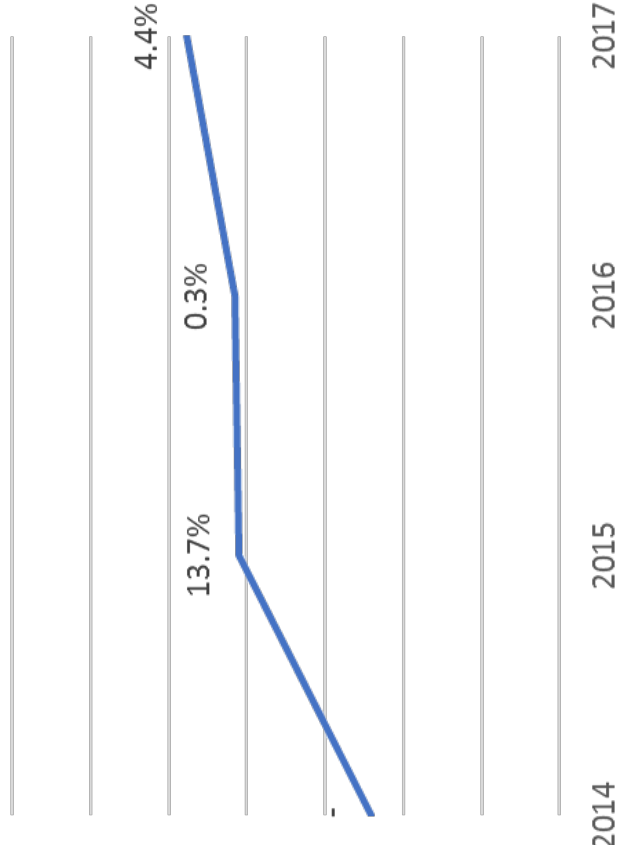
**Local Pharmacy Programs & Services**

**er 2017**

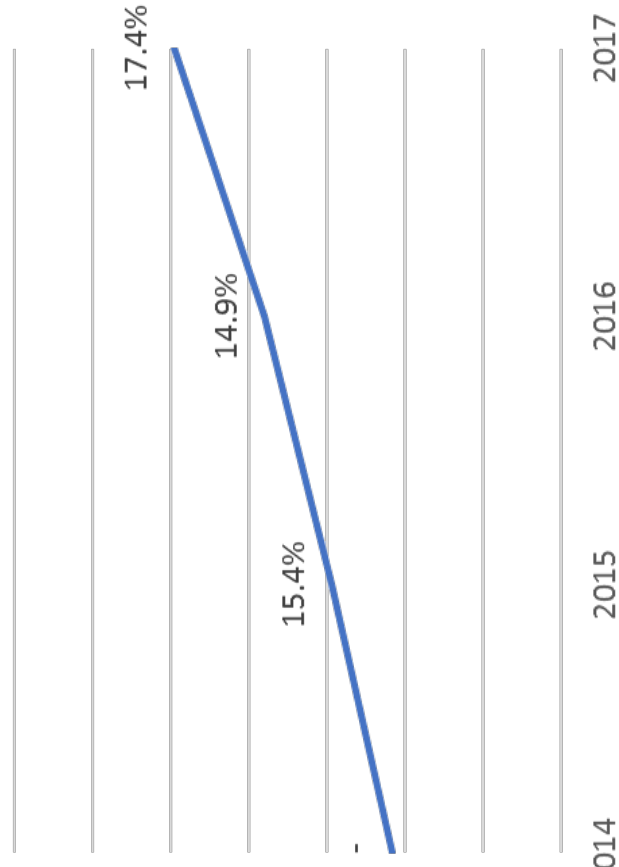
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# Outpatient Brand Drug Cost Trend

Brand Drug Cost PMPM  
(% Change)



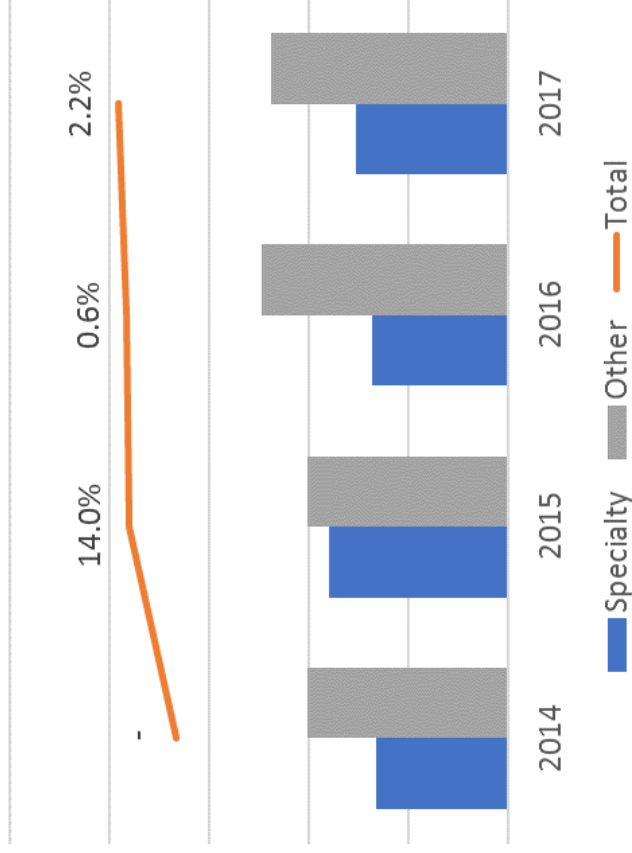
Brand Drug Cost per Rx  
(% Change)



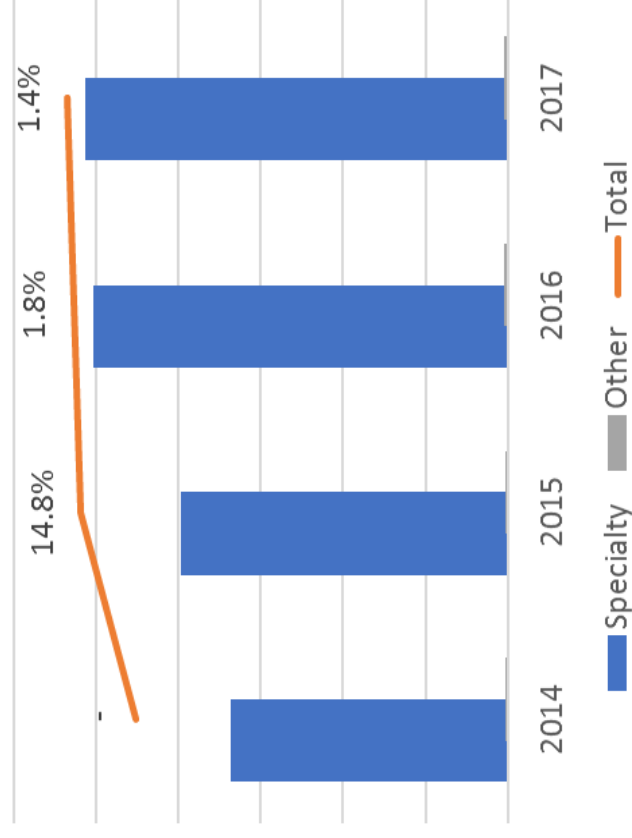
- Outpatient drug spend on brand medications has increased steadily over the last four years, averaging 16% in annual growth on a cost per prescription (RX) basis. On a PMPM basis, brand drug cost growth plateaus in 2016 due largely to lower hepatitis C utilization.

# Specialty Drug Cost Trend

### Specialty Drug Cost PMPM (% Change)



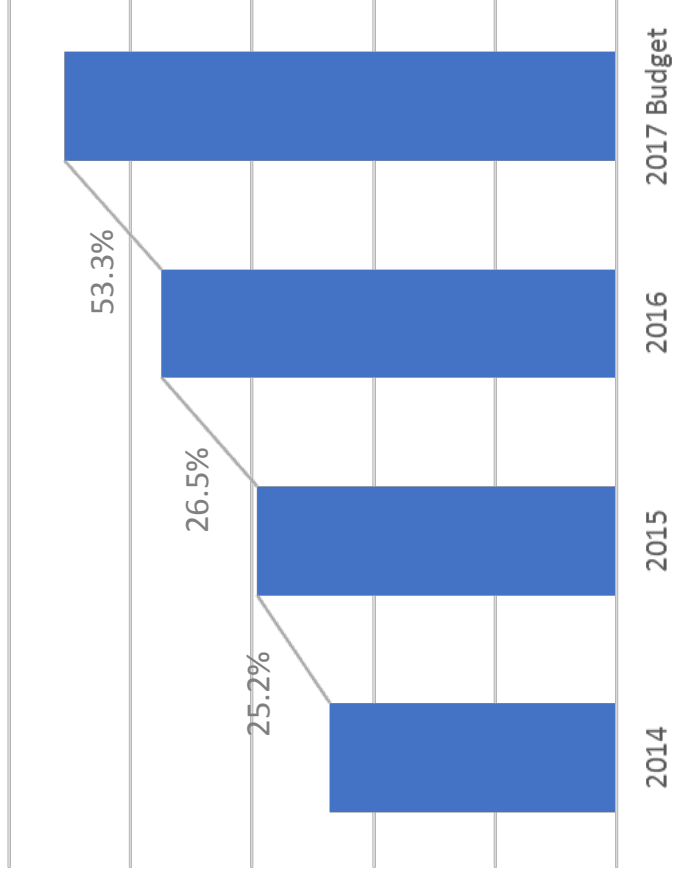
### Specialty Drug Cost per Rx (% Change)



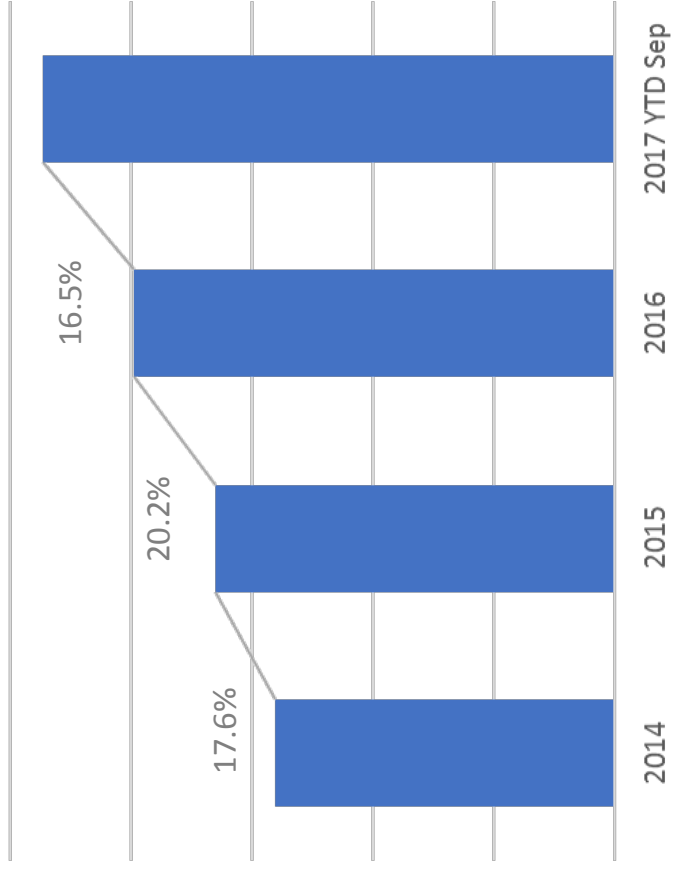
- Specialty drug is defined as cost of \$600 or more for a 30 day prescription. As of YTD Sep 2017, specialty drugs represented 39% of the total outpatient drug spend but only 1% of the total outpatient prescription volume.
- Specialty drug cost on a PMPM basis has increased steadily with the exception of 2016, driven by the decline in hepatitis C utilization. Specialty drug cost on a cost per prescription basis has increased steadily, slowing in 2017 as a result of lower hepatitis C spend.

# Administered Medications (CAMS) for Oncology

### CAMS Oncology Cost in Millions

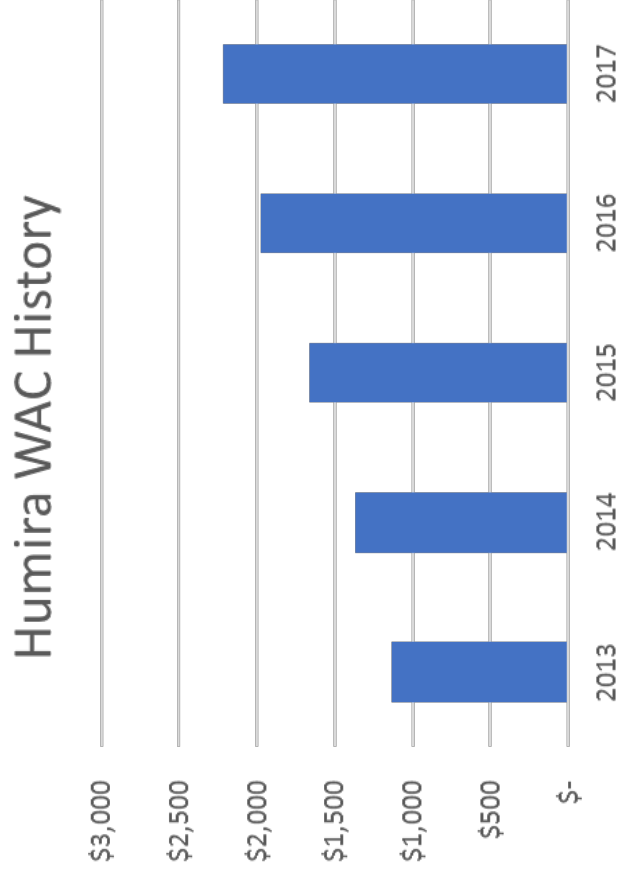
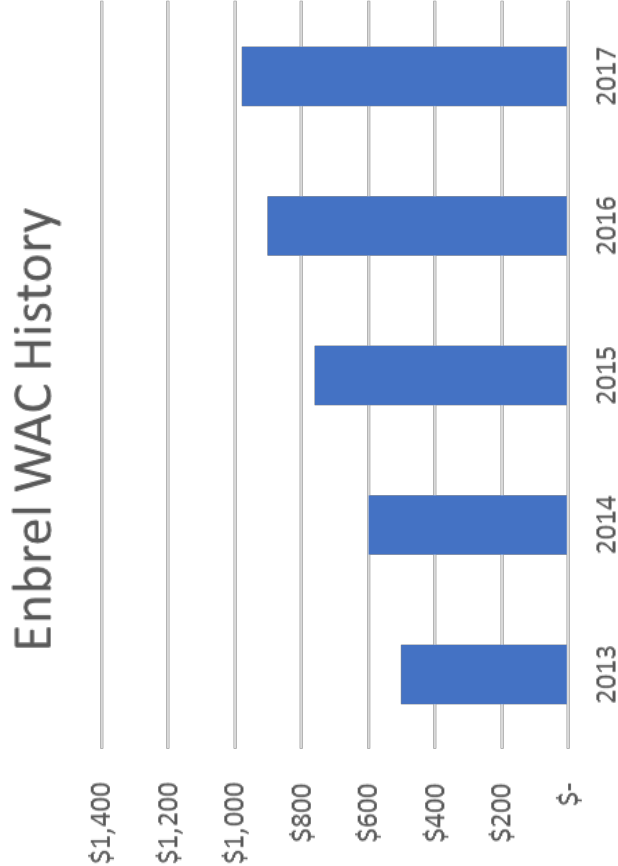


### CAMS Oncology Cost PMPM



- Clinic pharmacy drug spend for oncology have increased by double digit percentages annually on a dollar and dollar PMPM basis.
- The increase in spend is driven by increases in both utilization from expanded FDA indication approvals and by unit cost increases.

# Wholesale Acquisition Cost (WAC) Example



- Significant growth has been experienced for Enbrel and Humira demonstrate the increasing cost to treat patients with rheumatoid arthritis. This is one example of the rising cost of specialty drugs.
- Enbrel WAC increased by a compounded average growth rate or CAGR of 14.2% between 2013 to 2017
  - Price changes include various dosage forms of the injection and Sureclick® injection.
- Humira WAC increased by a CAGR of 14.4% between the same time period
  - Price changes include various dosage forms of the pen injection and kit injection.

# Understanding Competitive Prescription Drug Markets Entry and Supply Chain Dynamic

Panel 3: Understanding Intermediaries: Group Purchasing Organization

# BREAK



# Understanding Competition in Prescription Drug Markets Entry and Supply Chain Dynamics

Discussion: Potential Next Steps to Encourage Entry and Expand Access through  
Lower Prices

# High prescription drug prices: Balancing access and affordability

Rena Conti, PhD

Associate Professor

Departments of Pediatrics & Public Health Sciences

The University of Chicago

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## acknowledgements and disclaimer

The basis of this presentation is work done in collaboration with Peter Bernt, Melinda Buntin, David Howard, Sayeh Nikpay, Meredithenthal and Josh Sharfstein.

We are grateful for the support of the NCI, the Commonwealth Fund and the American Cancer Society.

Opinions expressed are mine alone and publicly available in a series of peer-reviewed publications.



adox: access to cures limited, high out of pocket cost



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## A National Strategy for the Elimination of Hepatitis B and C

Brian Strom, Chair

BOARD ON POPULATION HEALTH AND PUBLIC HEALTH PRACTICE

The National Academies of  
SCIENCES • ENGINEERING • MEDICINE

## Exclusive: Costs to public of \$84,000 for hep C drug 'outrageous' - Kaiser

BY DEENA BEASLEY  
LOS ANGELES | Wed Apr 2, 2014 3:41pm EDT

### Hepatitis C Treatments

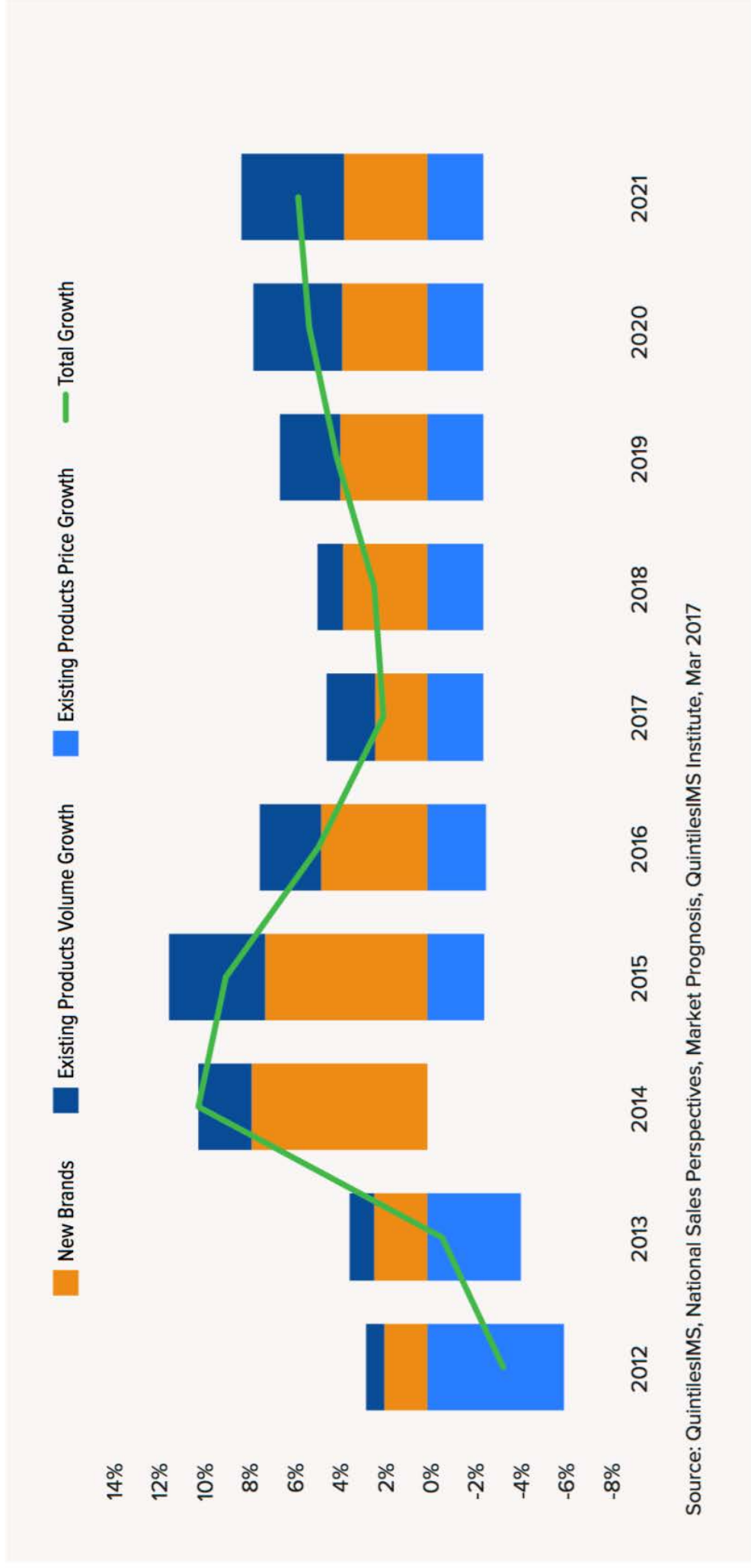
- High cure rates
- Initial prices >\$80K a course
- Significant access restrictions in both public and private sector
- Market failure: Fragmented insurance; incentives to cure are misaligned.



High morbidity, mortality  
Increased transmission

# ding growth: a mix of price and volume growth

Chart 8: Net Medicines Revenue Growth and Contribution by Type



Understanding the Drivers of Drug Expenditure in the U.S. Report by the QuintilesIMS Institute

Why are prescription drug prices high and growing?

A closer look at current market incentives.

facturers practice monopoly “by design” pricing

system: encourages innovative activity, private flow of capital into  
intensive, uncertain investment.

that mean that increasing prices reflect increased value?

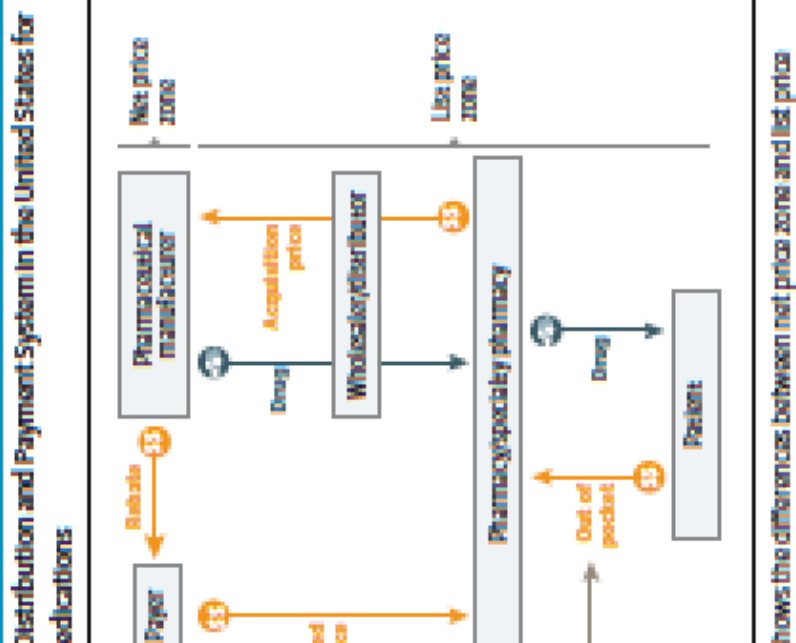
! Newer cancer drugs are not associated with greater survival compared  
older drugs.

the single biggest predictor of cancer drug launch price trend is time.

D, PB Bach, ER Berndt, **RM CONTI**. “Pricing in the Market for Anticancer Drugs,” *Journal of Economic Health*  
(1,Winter):139–162.



# Value chain capturing “value” chain impacts prices, spending



- Middlemen make money off difference between acquisition costs and reimbursement:
- Manufacturers give discounts/rebates to PBMs/GPOs/hospitals/MDs.
- Some discounts/rebates passed through to payers/patients, not all.
- Manufacturers build in discounts/rebates into prices, price setting over time.

na SB, **CONTI RM**, Yu NL, Bach PB. “Association of Prescription Drug Price Rebates in Medicare Part D Out-of-Pocket and Federal Spending,” *JAMA Intern Med.* 2017 Aug 1;177(8):1185-1188.

prices part of a “virtuous circle”, yet worry promise is

## Crazy Moves Pharmaceutical Companies Use Patents

Filed to: DRUGS

30.3K 59 2



## How to Protect a Drug Patent? Give it to a Native American Tribe

By KATIE THOMAS SEPT. 8, 2017



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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

PFIZER INC.,

Plaintiff,

v.

JOHNSON & JOHNSON and JANSSEN  
BIOTECH, INC.,

Defendants.

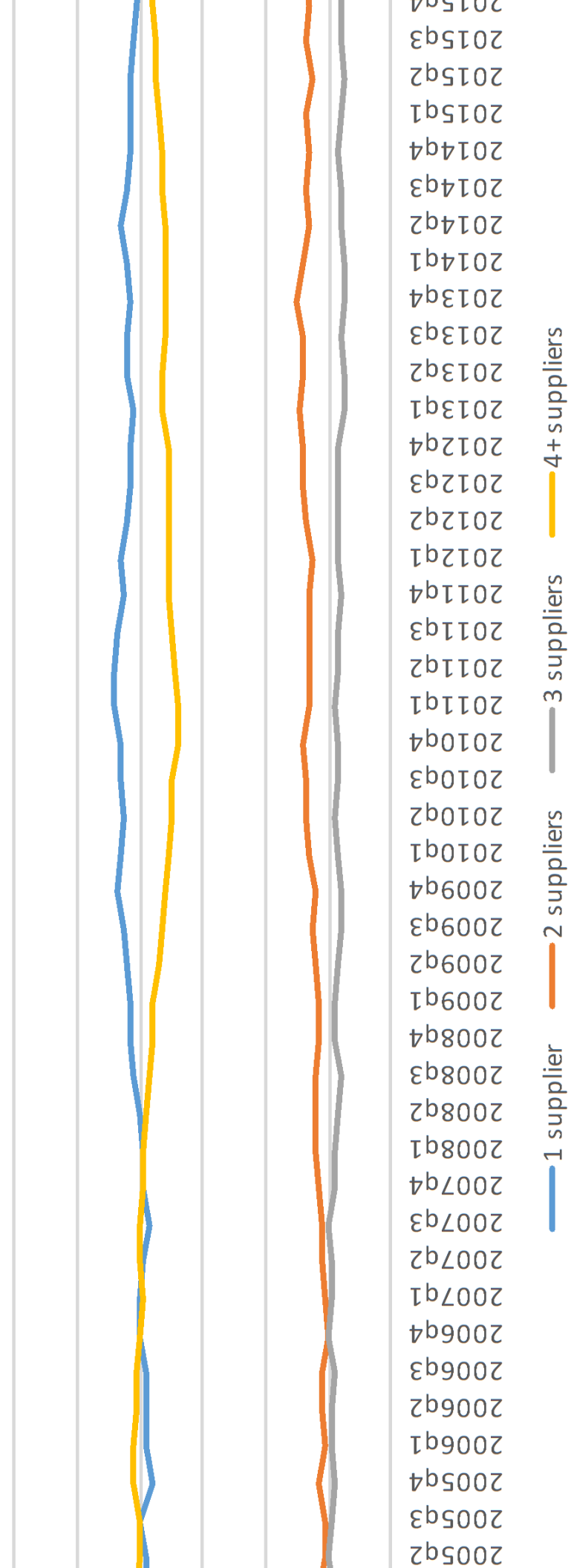
Case No.

JURY TRIAL DEMANDED

COMPLAINT

# Suppliers of generic drugs are concentrated

Share of units sold by supplier count, all generic molecules



Conti, RM CONTI, SJ Murphy. "The Landscape of US Generic Prescription Drug Markets, 2004-2016." NBER 23640. July 2017. Available at: <http://www.nber.org/papers/w23640>.

Public concern regarding the access/affordability paradox creates a  
opportunity for reform.

In such a complex system, there are no “silver bullets”.

ising reform efforts balance access & affordability

rove generic supply competition.

ance transparency/reduce profit seeking in the value chain.

## How to overcome generic supply competition

Company A has critical role to play:

1. Reduce Scott-Hart-Rodino thresholds on merger revenue scrutiny.

2. Aggressively pursue pay for delay, product hop, other evergreening activities.

Company B has critical role to play:

1. Lower barriers to entry through GDUFA fee revisions.

2. Reserve ability to reenter molecule markets after temporary supply disruptions/  
3. Identify alternative suppliers meeting quality manufacturing metrics.

4. Ensure quality manufacturing, redundant supply through other activities.

nce transparency/reduce profit seeking in the value

ce physicians/hospitals/pharmacies ability to profit off high priced  
S.

has critical a role to play:

enforcement of anti-kickback & RICO statutes.

reater scrutiny of proposed merger, acquisitions between value chain actors.

I'm happy to discuss, debate and provide more detail.

[rconti@uchicago.edu](mailto:rconti@uchicago.edu)

Thank you.





# PATIENTS FOR AFFORDABLE DRUGS™

David Mitchell  
Founder &  
President

November 8, 2017

# ents For Affordable Drugs



ly national patient organization focused exclusively on policies to  
ver drug prices

funding from any organizations that profit from development or  
tribution of prescription drugs

# Battle with Blood Cancer

Diagnosed with multiple myeloma in 2010

High cost drugs keeping me alive

When drugs don't work if people can't afford them





# A Patient Perspective



# Key Points Made Today



# Key Points Not Made Today

**Contact and  
resources:**



**David@patientsforaffordabledrugs.org**

**@DavidP4AD & @P4AD\_**

**Patients For Affordable Drugs**

# Understanding Competition in Prescription Drug Markets Entry and Supply Chain Dynamics

Discussion: Potential Next Steps to Encourage Entry and Expand Access through  
Lower Prices



# Understanding Competition in Prescription Drug Markets: Entry and Supply Chain Dynamics

## Closing Remarks