



CASE STUDY

Patient-Centric Field Reimbursement Quadruples Enrollment, Increases Stakeholder Satisfaction

Streamlining Processes with a Co-Pay Look-Back

A top-5 pharmaceutical company partnered with Labcorp to provide field reimbursement management (FRM) services for their autoimmune infusion therapy program. An expert team of field reimbursement managers was trained and deployed to educate healthcare providers on the use of the therapy, availability of the manufacturer's co-pay programs and use of the call center to verify patient benefit coverage. Labcorp played a critical role in facilitating enrollment and stakeholder satisfaction.

At the onset of the engagement, it became evident to the FRM team that patients and providers were extremely dissatisfied with the enrollment process, which was inhibiting product uptake. The client's co-pay enrollment process required a seven-page enrollment form to be completed and manually signed by three stakeholders – the patient, the prescriber and the infusion center physician – before benefits could be verified and enrollment completed. This complicated and time-consuming enrollment process resulted in a 24-48 hours authorization timeline.

Patients and providers proceeding with the infusions while waiting for the laborious enrollment process to be completed were left without co-pay coverage. For patients, this often meant several thousand dollars to be paid out of pocket, thereby increasing their burden. For providers, the situation consumed administrative resources, resulting in frustration and, frequently, unpaid patient co-pays. For the manufacturer, this resulted in reduced product uptake as well as a poor reputation in the competitive marketplace.

Understanding the Challenge

The Labcorp FRM team identified the problem by listening to feedback from healthcare providers and assessing call center activity. Call center reports showed that approximately 75% of patient calls were complaints about the enrollment process and lack of co-pay coverage. At the same time, about 90% of the field reimbursement team's time was spent resolving co-pay enrollment issues. The field reimbursement leadership team escalated the situation to the manufacturer and provided specific examples of patient hardship and process inefficiency. Based on the FRM team's experience in delivering high-impact, patient-centric services, they provided the manufacturer with proposed program changes focused on the patient journey, which included:

- Removing patient and provider barriers to engagement
- Developing a more streamlined, patient-centric enrollment process
- Building the manufacturer's brand equity in a competitive landscape

Solution: Seamless Enrollment with a Co-Pay Look-Back Period

The Labcorp FRM team recommended implementing a new patient enrollment process. A more concise enrollment form would be faster for patients to complete, requiring signatures by only the patient and their physician. The new process would also incorporate a co-pay look-back period permitting the patient co-pay to date back to the infusion appointment (up to 90 days). This feature would make physicians feel more confident in proceeding with their patient treatment plan and would offer patients peace of mind that their co-pays would be covered, removing substantial barriers to engagement. The client approved the restructuring, and the plan was implemented.

The new, patient-centric, streamlined enrollment process was well-received by patients and providers, greatly decreasing complaints to the call center and significantly increasing product uptake for the manufacturer. The manufacturer's image and brand equity were also bolstered in this competitive landscape.

Patient enrollment increased by more than 230% in one month and 450% over the quarter. Complaints to the call center decreased by an estimated 70%.

The field reimbursement team notes, "These enhancements allowed our client to leapfrog from an antiquated system fraught with frustration and barriers to a streamlined, patient-centric enrollment process that delivered a successful outcome."

Working in close partnership, Labcorp provides ongoing insights and continuous improvement opportunities to the client, including a recent upgrade to easy and efficient electronic co-pay enrollment. This collaborative relationship yields a customized, field-based strategy that reduces complexity and improves patient and provider access for sustained program success.

Conclusion

Identifying a service gap in the manufacturer's enrollment process, the Labcorp FRM proposed and implemented a patient-centric program re-design, including a streamlined enrollment process with a co-pay look-back feature. The recommended program enhancements resulted in a more seamless enrollment process, an increase in product uptake and a significant improvement in brand equity.

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