



SUMMARY NOTE

iFHP Big Ideas Week Connect | 19 – 23 June 2023

‘Five Trends in Pharmacy Impacting Access and Affordability’

**Chronis Manolis – Senior VP Pharmacy
UPMC**



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VP Pharmacy, UPMC

Pharmacy Leaders today face multiple challenges including medication innovation, affordability, equity, complexity in pharmacy, and the integration of digital health tools.

During this presentation, Chronis Manolis, Senior VP Pharmacy with UPMC, highlights the need for a value framework and stakeholder engagement to address these challenges effectively, and discusses each challenge in closer detail.

Chronis emphasizes the significance of the drug pipeline, particularly in advanced therapies like cell-and gene, and Car-T. Combined with accelerated approval processes, allowing these therapies to be brought to market before full evidence is available, their high price tags raise concerns about affordability and long-term access. Various solutions are pursued in general, with warranty contracts the most promising of potential solutions. Nevertheless, there is inherent complexity in implementing warranty contracts, due to the possibility of an individual to leave a plan post-cure and join another plan, skewing the balance of where costs and benefits are incurred. The use of registries to track patients’ progress and/or regression could be a way towards addressing this specific issue, alongside an equalisation mechanism to ensure a just allocation of cost and benefits.

Chronis provides a specific example to illustrate that the initial perception of gene therapy as a one-time cure may not always hold over time. Additional complexity lays in the possibility of an unexpected need for lifelong therapy arising for some patients who did not thrive as expected after receiving gene therapy.

Chronis also discusses the challenge of biosimilars, when insufficient regulation and adverse incentives block their wider uptake.

Specific cases are discussed to illustrate the problem of rising drug prices in the US and the various efforts to address this problem. Regulatory changes have sparked controversy and legal battles with pharmaceutical companies.

Stakeholder engagement is identified as a crucial factor in addressing these challenges. Physicians, pharmacists, and technology need to work together to optimize medication use, improve patient education, and reduce adverse events and hospitalizations.

The presentation acknowledges the reluctance of some pharmaceutical companies to take on risk and participate in warranty contracts, given the lack of competition for certain high-cost drugs. Chronis suggests alternative payment models, such as pay-over-time or milestone-based payments, can be used to ensure that patient outcomes are met before further payments are made.

In conclusion, the presentation underscores the need for collaboration, value-based care, and innovative solutions to address challenges in healthcare and pharmacy. The speaker emphasizes the importance of ensuring access, affordability, and improved patient outcomes through stakeholder engagement, while navigating the complexities of the drug pipeline, pricing, and regulatory environment.

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