Workers' Comp

Rising Opioid Abuse, Increasing Acceptance of Marijuana and COVID-19 Continue to Shape Pharmacy Programs

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3 MIN READ

SAN DIEGO, CA—Mitchell, a leading provider of technology, connectivity and information solutions to the Property and Casualty (P&C) claims and Collision Repair industries, today announced the release of the Mitchell Pharmacy Solutions 2020 Annual Clinical Review. The Clinical Review collects data from respected industry sources that provide crucial insights for pharmacy programs as they plan for the future, and is available on mPower.mitchell.com. Among its many insights, the Clinical Review showed that despite opioid prescriptions falling by 37% over the last 6 years, suspected drug overdoses, including opioids, accelerated by 18% during the first half of 2020, driven by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Authored by Mitchell Pharmacy Solutions Chief Clinical Officer, Dr. Mitch Freeman, the Clinical Review highlights several other major pharmacy trends impacting auto casualty and workers' compensation. In addition to a discussion of COVID-19 impacts and opioid prescribing, Freeman also looks at medical marijuana, topical medications and therapeutic alternatives.

“With so much changing in our industry—and the world around us—right now, it's more important than ever to have a clear picture of the trends affecting pharmacy programs,” said Freeman. “We've reviewed, analyzed and summarized important current research and clinical studies available to assemble this report, making it an essential planning tool for the industry.”

Other Important Insights From the Review Include:

- Public acceptance of marijuana continues to trend upward, with a May 2020 Gallup poll finding that 70% of Americans see smoking marijuana as morally acceptable. This trend is in line with continued legalization efforts among the states, which will likely affect how the industry supports marijuana in coming years.
- New studies on marijuana raise health concerns related to THC, while other studies continue to find that marijuana could be helpful in treating pain.
- Topical medications continue to increase in cost and utilization, with one study finding that the AWP of generic topicals increased 273% and brand topicals increased 379% over an eleven-year period.

- Therapeutic alternatives may provide a substitute to high-cost brand name drugs, such as extended release therapies, which one study estimated to cost the healthcare system nearly $14 billion more over a five-year span than equivalent twice-a-day medications may have cost.

The report breaks down each trend category and provides examples insurers can use to anticipate trends in the upcoming year and monitor in their program. To read the full review, please visit Mitchell's mPower website.

About Mitchell International

Headquartered in San Diego, California, Mitchell International, Inc. delivers smart technology solutions that simplify and accelerate claims handling, repair processes and pharmacy transactions, driving more accurate, consistent and cost-effective resolutions. Mitchell integrates deep industry expertise into its workflow solutions, providing unparalleled access to data, advanced analytics and decision support tools. Mitchell's comprehensive solution portfolio and robust SaaS infrastructure connect its customers in ways that enable tens of millions of electronic transactions to be processed each month for more than 300 insurance providers, over 65,000 pharmacies and 30,000 collision repair facilities, as well as countless other Property & Casualty industry supply partners across the Americas and Europe.

Mitchell, Genex, and Coventry have recently combined their joint industry expertise and advanced technology solutions into one organization to simplify and optimize property, casualty and disability claims processes and services. For more information, please visit mitchell.com.

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