**THE CHALLENGE**

Alabama has the highest opioid prescribing rate in the nation — almost twice the national average. Alabama providers wrote nearly 5.9 million prescriptions in 2016. That’s equivalent to 1.2 prescriptions for every man, woman and child in the state.¹

To help combat the opioid crisis, MedImpact partnered with the largest health plan in Alabama to achieve a two-fold goal: reducing high-risk opioid utilization and lowering opioid prescribing rates.

**THE SOLUTION**

MedImpact implemented its Opioid Cumulative Dosing Program to improve outcomes in the plan’s pharmacy benefit. The program helps to: 1) prevent the use of multiple prescribers and pharmacies; 2) lower costs in the medical benefit by decreasing ER and hospital admissions; and 3) reduce overdose-related deaths.

The program applies point-of-sale messaging directly to the pharmacy. This is based on Morphine Equivalent Dose thresholds that are calculated from a specific drug and dose criteria. Soft-stop edits may be overridden by pharmacists or via a clinical review. A hard-stop edit rejects claims meeting or exceeding the highest threshold and can only be overridden after clinical review.

The program incorporates plan-specific parameters to target overutilization and optimize appropriate use, which also minimizes false positives. To help manage member satisfaction, MedImpact conducted proactive outreach and increased communication between members, prescribers and pharmacies.

**THE RESULTS**

The program decreased the plan’s opioid utilization by 15.17% — with nearly a 30% reduction in plan spend on opioids. By reducing high-risk claims by nearly a quarter, the program helped decrease overdose risk and curbed unnecessary pharmacy and medical costs.

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² Johns Hopkins University; The Washington Post: https://rising.jhu.edu/opioid-crisis

³ Kaiser Family Foundation; Fortune: http://fortune.com/2018/04/05/opioid-crisis-cost-employers

⁴ AHIP; Kaiser Family Foundation: https://www.healthsystemtracker.org/brief/look-how-opioid-crisis-has-affected-people-with-employer-coverage/#item-start


MedImpact, an independent, trend-focused pharmacy benefit manager (PBM), is the nation’s largest privately held PBM, serving health plans, self-funded employers and government entities. Our unique business model aligns us with our clients. We focus on effectively managing pharmacy benefits to promote Lower Cost and Better Care through One Source.