

# MARKET INSIGHTS

## Beyond 2018

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# The Evolution of Pharmacy Policy Roles in the Economic Value Chain



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It's well documented that the use of specialty medications, however defined, will continue to rise. This is a great news story for patients and the health care practitioners who manage the treatment of some life-changing conditions. The call is for continued ingenious innovation in a high-stakes landscape where policy and supply chain economics continue to evolve.

Many specialty medications today require support to ensure prompt onset of therapy, reimbursement, and in some cases, ongoing patient monitoring of one type or another. Some therapeutic areas previously treated intravenously only, can now be managed with subcutaneous injections by the patient themselves or even with oral treatment options. There are molecules in the pipeline that will not fit the current product supply chain and for these products, new solutions will emerge.

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In Canada, every prescription drug must be dispensed by a pharmacy to the patient or the clinic. Both the business and the profession of pharmacy have been undergoing monumental change in the last decade at the policy and reimbursement level and it appears this rate of change and adjustment will persist. For specialty products, the need to support patients in a manner that optimizes patient engagement will also continue and this will happen in a landscape of price contraction for the industry.

The following three key uncertainties will need to be addressed as the specialty space evolves:

1. How will an expanded scope of practice in pharmacy evolve to interface with other HCPs in the delivery of care where more complex therapies are required?
2. What economies of scale and volume at pharmacy will be required to maintain an efficient prescription delivery model as overall volumes continue to transition from traditional products to complex specialty therapies?
3. How will the reimbursement landscape impact the pharmacy model in such a diverging economy of high volume commodity products and high-touch, high-dollar therapies?

Today, a multitude of pharmacy models offer services as unique as the growing number of treatment regimens. Some of these pharmacies have become significant participants in specialty pharmaceuticals while others are working to determine how they may participate.

There are benefits to investigating the intricacies of the pharmacy model:

- Identify unique opportunities to educate and engage all the right stakeholders to optimize patient care.
- Improve your understanding of the patient treatment journey to inform appropriate use of resources.

For a marketer, the complex interdependencies between manufacturers, payers, pharmacy, and patients complicates the development of a meaningful value proposition. In these conditions, your trade relations resources must strategically assess the needs of the patient in the context of the evolving role of pharmacy in the value chain.

**CPM**

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