Association between Triptan Use and Cardiac Contraindications in an Insured Migraine Population

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Methods: Study Population

- Ten representative commercial and/or Medicaid health plans in the MedAssurant Medical Outcomes Research for Effectiveness and Economics Registry (MORE2 Registry™) were included in the study.
- The reporting year (the year of claims data on which measurement was based) was 2009.
- Only adult members between ages 18 and 64, with both medical and pharmacy benefits, were eligible for inclusion (N = 2.5 million, across the 10 plans).
- The Migraine Population was identified through claims and pharmacy data as patients having at least one of the following criteria:
  1. or more claim(s)/encounter(s) for migraine, or
  2. or more “episodes” of headache reflected by multiple claim(s)/encounter(s) ("recurrent headache") >7 days apart, or
  3. or more prescription(s) for a triptan or migraine analgesic
- Individuals with a diagnosis of subarachnoid hemorrhage, brain tumor, and/or intracranial bleed were excluded.
- Triptans were identified through pharmacy claims based on at least one prescription for any 5-HT1B,1D receptor agonist (triptan).

Migraine Quality of Care Measurement Definitions

- **Measure RX.2 Prescription for a Triptan AND Cardiac Contraindication**
  - A prescription for at least one triptan associated with at least one cardiac contraindication, identified as having a cardiac contraindication used a triptan during the measurement year.

Results

**Distribution of Triptan Prescriptions AND Cardiac Contraindication(s) by Age Group**

- **Triptan and No Triptan**

**Migraine Quality of Care Measurement Set (RX.2 and RX.8) by Age Group**

- **Triptan and No Triptan**

Discussion

**Triptans and Cardiac Contraindications**

- Our data show that almost 8% of the Migraine Population had a cardiac contraindication as determined by at least one medical or pharmacy claim during the measurement year.
- Twenty-two percent of the Migraine Population identified as having a cardiac contraindication used a triptan during the measurement year. Highly varied rates of use between health plans is of particular interest.
- Our study demonstrates an unmet medical need for migraine patients who have cardiovascular disease/risk.

**The Migraine Quality Measurement Set**

- This examination of two measures included in the Migraine Quality Measurement Set demonstrates the potential value of the measures to identify pharmacy utilization trends.
- In addition to identifying a general concern about the widespread use of triptans in the at-risk population with cardiac contraindications, the pilot test demonstrates significant variation across plans.
- The measures can be of value to health plans in identifying potential quality and safety issues and comparing their performance with national benchmarks.

References


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