

ICORE Introduces Autoimmune Connections, Industry's First Specialty Pharmacy Management Program for Rheumatoid Arthritis, Other Diseases

AVON, CT, Jul 22, 2010 (MARKETWIRE via COMTEX News Network) -- ICORE Healthcare, a Magellan Health Services division (NASDAQ: MGLN), has launched a first-of-its-kind, clinically based program to manage one of the fastest-growing areas of health care -- rheumatoid arthritis and other autoimmune diseases -- which will enable health plans to save up to \$15,000 per patient per year.

Autoimmune Connections lowers cost, develops consistent care programs and policies, and improves the quality of care. The program achieves these by leveraging all aspects of ICORE's business, including formulary optimization capabilities, unit cost management, sophisticated prior authorization and claims management technologies.

The program is based on American College of Rheumatology guidelines that define the appropriate use of biologic disease modifying anti-rheumatic drugs (DMARDs) in the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis. The development of Medical policy and provider education, are important to the successful implementation of the program. ICORE's staff members work closely with physicians to secure clinical buy-in and early adoption of the program.

"This is a significant step forward, because there currently is no comprehensive program available in the market for managing these therapies," said Dr. Alan Lotvin, president of ICORE.

The cost of DMARDs has grown significantly during the past few years, according to Dr. Lotvin. "This category has been minimally managed because of clinical complexity, changing practice patterns and the technological challenges related to payment for these drugs," Dr. Lotvin said.

Launch of the program follows a pilot conducted by ICORE, in partnership with rheumatologists and commercial payors, to identify management opportunities with patients who have rheumatoid arthritis, Crohn's disease and psoriasis.

"The program has validated that by taking nationally accepted clinical guidelines and developing a system to implement them in the community, we can improve drug utilization, maintain or improve the quality of patient care, and achieve significant cost efficiencies," Dr. Lotvin said.

The program is an evolution of ICORE's comprehensive oncology benefits management solution, which works from a similar clinically driven technology platform that has brought significant improvements in the clinical and financial outcomes associated with cancer care to payors.

"ICORE's Autoimmune Connections is straightforward to implement, with little disruption to physicians' workflow, while lending additional support to health plans. Our goal is to continue to refine the program in ways that will bring real solutions and cost savings to our clients and their millions of members. Timing for the program couldn't be better, since health plans are facing unprecedented financial pressures," Dr. Lotvin said.

"The Autoimmune Connections program gives us the ability to lower our cost, but most importantly gives the patients quality, consistent care," stated Steven Marciniak, Director, Pharmacy Administration of Priority Health. "Our staff's one-on-one interaction with the providers, early on and throughout has helped make the program a success."

About Magellan/ICORE ICORE Healthcare is redefining how America's health plans manage complex specialty pharmaceuticals to ensure clinical excellence, while minimizing the costs in one of the fastest-growing areas of health care spending. ICORE is part of Magellan Health Services (NASDAQ: MGLN), a leading specialty health care management organization that delivers innovative solutions in collaboration with health plans, corporations, government agencies and their members nationwide.

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