

# How Repatha Could Impact Employer Rx Costs



A clinical study showed that Repatha<sup>®</sup>, a specialty cholesterol-lowering drug, reduced the risk of deaths, heart attacks, and strokes by 20% over a 2-year period. What the study doesn't say is that Repatha is up to 7 times more costly than the statins used to lower cholesterol today. This could spell trouble for employers, especially since a national ad campaign aimed at consumers is underway.

## Cost of Repatha vs Statins

Repatha is an injectable specialty medication approved in 2015 to lower LDL cholesterol. Repatha and another drug, Praluent<sup>®</sup>, belong to a newer class of drugs called PCSK9 inhibitors. At an average cost of \$14,500 per year, insurance carriers have limited the use of these medications to patients with specific genetic conditions or for whom other medicines failed at least twice.

## Cost of Repatha vs Statins

For more than 30 years, statins have been the safe and cost-effective drugs of choice to lower LDL cholesterol. Since most statins are available generically, the cost to treat cholesterol is substantially lower than with the PCSK9 inhibitor drugs. Innovu data shows that allowable charges for statins range from \$15 to \$2,500 per year.

## Western PA Client's Risk Exposure

For an Innovu client in Western Pennsylvania with more than 40,000 members, the costs could be staggering if members were prescribed Repatha instead of a less costly statin. So Innovu analyzed a year's worth of member claims data to understand the client's potential risk exposure.

Between April 1, 2016 - March 31, 2017, 44,800 members generated 25,000 statin claims, costing our client \$583,000. Only 4 members were taking specialty drugs to lower their cholesterol, resulting in 43 claims totaling \$34,000 (see table below).

Rx Drug	# of Members	# of Claims	Annual Cost
Statins	44,800	25,000	\$583,000
PCSK9 Inhibitors	4	43	\$ 34,000

For every one member who is prescribed Repatha or other PCSK9 inhibitor, claims costs would increase between \$12,000 - 14,485. For every 100 members making the switch, the plan is looking at more than \$140,000 in Rx cost increases.

Armed with this insight, the client is working closely with its broker to better manage the potential cost increases.

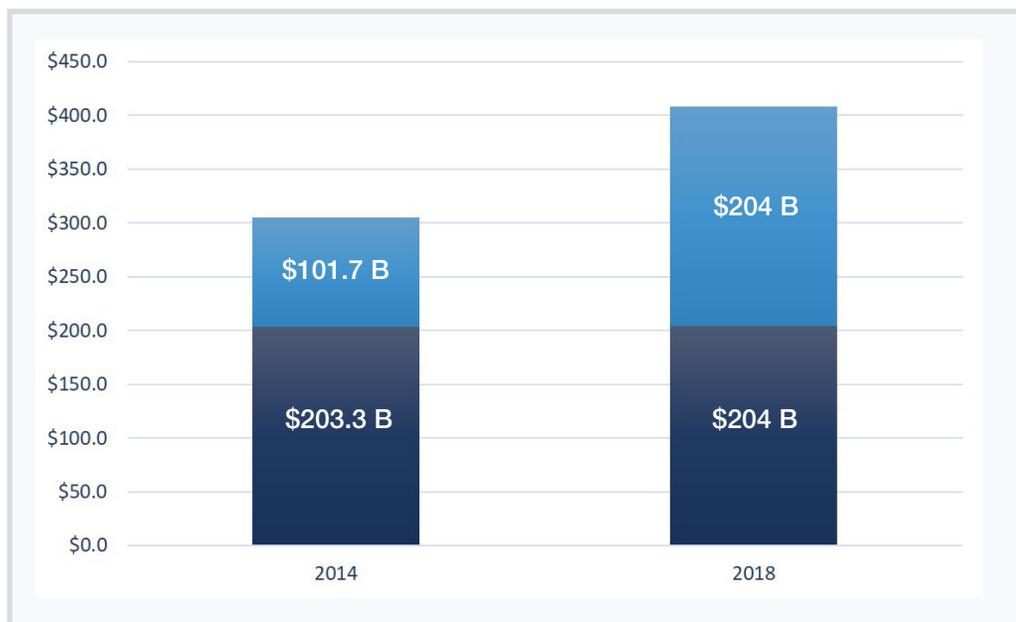
Additional Rx costs for our client if 100 members switched from statins to PCSK9 inhibitors:

**\$140,000**

## Innovu Helps You Understand Your Exposure

Innovu integrates and analyzes benefits and risk data to uncover never seen correlations, costs, trends, and risk. Put your data to work for you. Contact Innovu today.

US Commercial Prescription Drug Cost, in Billions



\*Source: Congressional Research Service, August 3, 2015

### About Innovu

Innovu delivers secure, cloud-based data analytic solutions to self-funded and fully insured employers, benefit advisors, and communities (business groups on health and industry associations). By securely integrating benefits and risk data across all programs — medical, Rx, vision, dental, wellness/biometrics, workers' compensation, disability, absenteeism, safety, 401(k), etc. — we create a 360-degree view of their populations.

They can use this correlative, never before seen insight to design and measure targeted benefits programs and interventions that improve member health and mitigate business risk.



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