



Specialty RX Cost Containment Expertise
Successfully Addresses Impact of Social
Determinants of Health on Individuals with Rare Diseases

Author: Dea Belazi, President and CEO, AscellaHealth



Social determinants of health (SDoH) are conditions in which people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship and age that affect a wide range of health, functioning and quality-of-life outcomes.¹

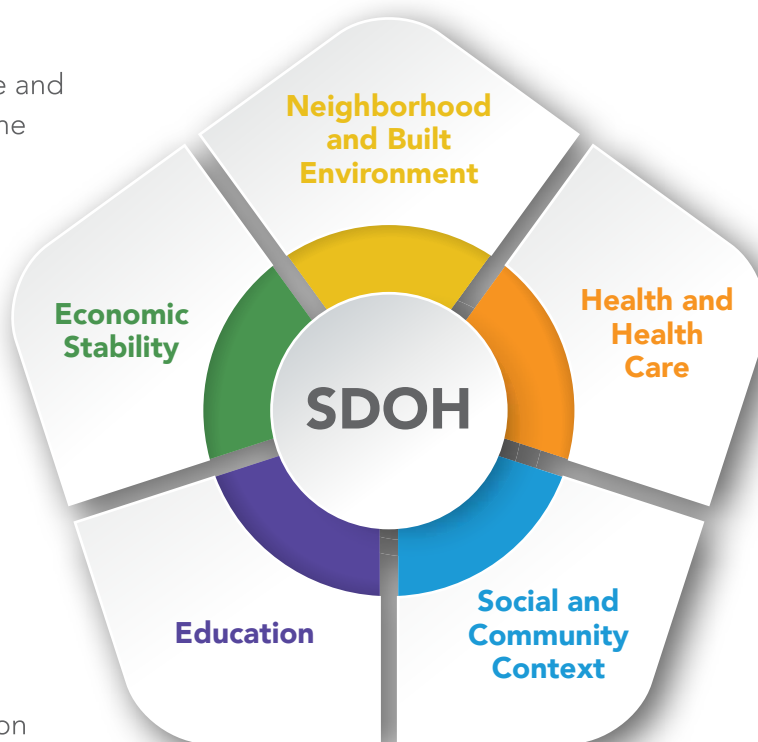
Social, economic and physical factors across diverse environments and settings establish the sense of security and well-being that affect people's lives. Ideally, everyone would have access to optimal resources, including safe and affordable housing, education, public safety, healthy foods, local emergency/health services and environments free of toxins—but too often this is not the case.²

Recent studies estimate that social determinants can be responsible for up 80-90% of a health outcome.³ While healthcare providers do their best to understand as much about the patient's life as possible, they don't always have the time or reach to fully understand the impact of SDoH for each person. For patients at elevated risk of developing chronic disease, episodic care fails to sufficiently meet their needs.⁴

Social determinants
are responsible for
80-90%
of a health outcome.

Conditions such as diabetes, asthma, heart disease and obesity are all linked to environments, cultures and behaviors that impact individuals, creating a complex web of challenges that often lead to eroding health, limited functionality and avoidable health costs. Reducing the impact of chronic diseases will require payers and providers to investigate the social determinants – including non-clinical issues – that are at the root of chronic disease.⁵

With year-over-year growth in specialty drug revenue and new drug applications for specialty therapeutics at the FDA signaling a growing industry trend toward specialty, there is also a growing focus on SDoH among specialty pharmaceutical manufacturers seeking commercialization opportunities. In this competitive marketplace, manufacturers increasingly recognize that payers and healthcare systems are choosing to partner with specialty medical Rx pharmacy benefit managers (SPBMs) to better address SDoH and contain costs associated with specialty drugs. To understand the size of this market, infusible products represent 40% of the pharmaceutical pipeline. Within that, 450 drugs for rare diseases are in the pipeline over the next three years, with an average price tag of at least \$350,000, each requiring different dispensing and administration methods.



Source: <https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/social-determinants-of-health>





This white paper explores how AscellaHealth's specialty approach maps well to assist employers, payers, TPAs and other stakeholders with care and handling essential to effectively address SDoH. Our approach serves as a collaborative model for helping clients find resources and support. The social risk factors that guide planning with manufacturers include access to affordable healthcare services and medications, access to emerging communication technologies and services to support health literacy and telehealth services.

The AscellaHealth Difference

Our specialty medical pharmacy management is designed to reduce costs, increase specialty drug availability and improve patient outcomes through appropriate medication therapy management.

AscellaHealth programs are targeted to specific populations that have an acute or chronic condition to ensure that individuals and caregivers are aware of programs and empowered after diagnosis and referral. It is a personalized approach that provides a preferred formulary, evidence-based clinical policy bulletins and pathways, step therapy, lab and other clinical assessments. With a cadence of interventions, AscellaHealth facilitates ongoing positive outcomes through persistence, adherence, compliance and just-in-time collaborative patient management. Furthermore, our professional teams regularly measure and track program effectiveness and, across the continuum of providers, validate savings and opportunities for continuous improvement and best practices outcomes.

Our programs bring in the support and resources of key advocacy groups, such as the National Hemophilia Foundation (NHF), Jeffrey Modell Foundation (JMF) and the Immune Deficiency Foundation (IDF), which provide an extension of community resources and additional insurance support tools to ensure patients get access to these key therapies. Our patient-centered approach supports the shared mission to inform clinicians, patients and payers with high-quality information designed to enhance patient care, clinical outcomes and cost management approaches.

With effective management of the complications of chronic illness, our professionals strive to mitigate unnecessary costs—including the SDoH that contribute to these costs—providing intended clinical outcomes and support for the member experience. This improves the condition, monitors adherence, provides dosing accuracy, prevents avoidable ER visits, reports cost savings and enhances the member/client journey. AscellaHealth's Medical Therapy Management (MTM) program provides personalized medical care that is anchored by a dedicated specialty team. Each patient receives a disease-specific care plan that addresses the needs of the patient for their complex neurologic and immunologic conditions. Our proven methods enable savings without sacrificing patient quality of care.

Ultimately, this focus on SDoH—and putting the patient/member first—reflects our commitment to providing **a robust, safe and affordable drug benefit to members** while improving outcomes and reducing costs.





Unlike traditional PBMs, AscellaHealth is a specialty medical Rx PBM with the full suite of services comparable to other PBMs but with the additional benefits of technology, analytics and clinical services designed for specialty cost containment. AscellaHealth manages specialty drugs covered under the pharmacy benefit, including some that may be going through retail pharmacy, and those that are prescribed and covered under the medical benefit.

During these challenging times, strategies that cut costs without compromising quality of care are in demand. AscellaHealth's site of care (SOC) optimization represents a key strategy for reducing the cost of specialty biologic medications by steering high cost infusion to the best site of care for the patient.

AscellaHealth's Leading Strategy for Specialty Pharmacy Success

The key areas of our MTM program bring in the support and align with the missions of our advocacy partners and provide payers with high-quality information to enhance patient care, clinical outcomes and cost management approaches.



Improve access to specialty drugs (limited distribution drugs) and tracking of how they work with patients to better inform prescribing patterns.



Accelerate a patient's speed-to-therapy and improve quality of care through integrated clinical coordination.



Improved communication, therapy management and patient intervention.



Overcome the challenges that exist with limited distribution networks and access.



More oversight of specialty drugs.



Reporting to ensure dose accuracy, and manage drug waste and abuse for a clean savings measurement to track cost outcomes.



Data is the key—and access to quality data and cost-effective specialty care can demonstrate key measures such as time to first fill, time on therapy, adherence and improved patient outcomes—from start to finish of a patient's entire episode.

AscellaHealth Hemophilia Management Program

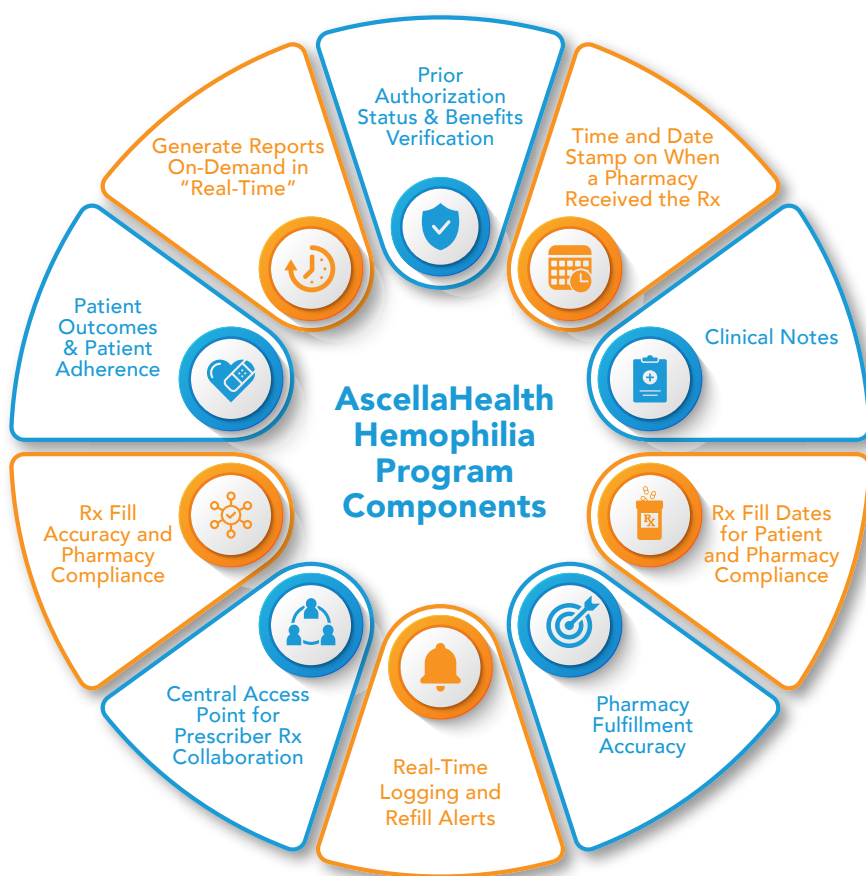
The AscellaHealth Hemophilia Management Program reflects our approach to all chronic disease patients. We offer an all-encompassing data analytics interface technology solution that has the ability to capture, integrate and provide unlimited amounts of prescription data and healthcare outcome analytics in a real-time platform. Our data and analytics solutions provide accurate insights into patient care, provider Rx value, Rx trends, specialty pharmacy performance, dose optimization, treatment paths, and other clinical intervention reports.





For hemophiliac patients, we effectively manage the disorder and improve outcomes:

- ✓ Decrease number of bleeds
- ✓ Correct product, dose and administration interval
- ✓ Drug screening for interactions and contraindications
- ✓ Adherence to prescribed treatment regimen
- ✓ Patient and caregiver education
- ✓ Patient lifestyle management
- ✓ Joint/muscle bleed management



Source: <https://www.ascellahealth.com/hemophilia-management>

We also eliminate factor waste and minimize total cost of care by managing home inventory, preventing over or underutilization, eliminating avoidable ER visits, minimizing dose variance through assay management, minimizing number of infusions, prompting infusions and adjunctive therapies and preventing complications.



Case Study

Take the case of a teenage boy with hemophilia who was covered by an employer group client that generated payer costs of \$725,000 annually. After the patient was placed in AscellaHealth's hemophilia program, the **drug price dropped to**

\$212,000 annually.





Proper care management offers substantial economic and clinical benefits. The impact of a utilization management and dose optimization program involves comprehensive medical criteria, steps through alternative therapies when clinically appropriate, and pharmacist-led interventions to recommend dose optimization. When it comes to addressing SDoH, our approach improves quality of life and increases patient satisfaction by encouraging patient independence and empowerment and providing community support.

References

¹Healthy People; Social Determinants of Health; <https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/social-determinants-of-health>; accessed September 1, 2020.

²Healthy People.

³<https://nam.edu/social-determinants-of-health-101-for-health-care-five-plus-five/>; accessed May 18, 2020.

⁴Bresnick, Jennifer; Combating Chronic Disease through the Social Determinants of Health; Health IT Analytics; <https://healthitanalytics.com/features/combating-chronic-disease-through-the-social-determinants-of-health>; accessed September 1, 2020.

⁵Bresnick.

About AscellaHealth

AscellaHealth, a national specialty pharmacy benefit manager (SPBM™), serving commercial, Medicare and Medicaid segments, offers a comprehensive range of high-quality prescription drug benefit management services that are tailored to each unique client's needs. We use technology platforms that provide data analytics, patient education, therapy optimization programs, and unique clinical programs for limited distribution products that generate savings for our clients and promote enhanced patient health outcomes. We approach each client based on their specific needs, either white labeling or providing our services à la carte for the pharmacy and medical benefit. Visit ascellahealth.com.