



# News Notes

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VOLUME 16 | ISSUE 2 | FALL 2020 | GUEST ARTICLES



EXPRESS SCRIPTS®

## Novel, Highly Targeted Therapies Offer Great Promise for Patients with Devastating Conditions – But Come with High Costs

### **What gene therapies mean for your members:**

Gene therapies offer patients the possibility of one time, potentially curative treatments. For patients with certain conditions, gene therapies may be the only viable option for treatment. For others, the promise of gene therapy replaces a lifetime of costly, burdensome medication.

### **Available therapies:**

To date, two gene replacement therapies have been approved in the U.S. – Luxturna® and Zolgensma®. Luxturna®, launched by Spark Therapeutics, is for the treatment of a rare condition causing blindness; and Zolgensma®, from Novartis, for the treatment of Spinal Muscular Atrophy (SMA) in infants. Although both of these therapies are intended for rare conditions, many of the gene therapies in the near-term pipeline are for more prevalent conditions like cancer and hemophilia. In fact, the FDA expects to approve 10-20 gene and cell therapies per year by 2025.

### **A strong foundation:**

Because of the complexities and therapeutic nuances specific to genetic conditions, it's important to have a partner with a strong foundation in support of rare and gene therapies. Accredo has been the most trusted pharmacy partner in this space – with access to 32% of exclusive distribution drugs (more than any other single specialty pharmacy) and the only pharmacy with access to both gene therapies on the market today.

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Our affiliation with these national organizations is a value-added benefit for our members.





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We believe gene therapies will require payment and patient care systems which are as novel as the medications themselves – and that may mean customization by individual product as well as developing unique partnerships. We were first to market with a pay-over-time solution for the first two approved therapies. And, as a health services organization, we were first market with a comprehensive solution, Embarc Benefit ProtectionSM, addressing a critical need for affordable access to care across the healthcare system.

Embarc is a new offering that brings together the health services, medical benefit management and specialty pharmacy expertise of Express Scripts, eviCore, Accredo and CuraScriptSD to make breakthrough medicines more affordable and ensure access for those who need it. Plans enrolled pay a per-member-per-month fee for a gene therapy network which provides patients the coverage they need to access the potentially curative therapy at no additional cost to the patient. Ultimately, Express Scripts is and remains committed to working to put these new medications within reach of the patients who need them, while offering peace of mind and better protection against high-cost therapies. Please reach out to ESI for more information.

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