



## To The Point

# SPECIALTY DRUGS: What Employers Need to Know

National Cooperative 

*With specialty drug costs rising out of control, it is important to know how to design a cost-effective, yet high-quality plan for your employees. Read on for National CooperativeRx's recommendations to make sure you're getting the most out of your benefit dollars.*

Specialty drugs may only be used by 1-2% of individuals, but they accounted for approximately 52% of drug spend in 2020, according to CVS Caremark's most recent annual Drug Trend Report.

- Work with a specialty network.
- Limit prescription refills to one fill or one month's supply to minimize potential waste.
- Leverage your pharmacy benefit manager's (PBM) formulary or preferred drug strategies.

### What's So Special About Specialty Drugs?

Since there is no industry standard definition for specialty drugs, the drugs included on a specialty drug list will vary between vendors. However, specialty drugs will typically share several common characteristics:

- Very expensive price tag.
- Primarily used to treat complex and chronic conditions.
- Requires special handling and administration.

### Push Your Savings To The Max

It is crucial that employers design a quality and affordable specialty drug benefit plan with multiple approaches. To accomplish this:

### Rebates

Make sure your organization is receiving 100% of specialty rebates. The financial significance of rebates is great when it comes to specialty drugs, because drugmakers pay PBMs billions of dollars in rebates each year. Large employers are more likely than small employers to receive the entire rebate amount for specialty drugs.

### The Final Word

A sound plan designed specifically for your group is key to drive performance and favorable outcomes. Partner with someone you trust who can provide solid recommendations, plan oversight and support on your behalf while still advocating for the health of your plan participants.