



NORTH STAR  
OPINION RESEARCH

## **Key Findings from the Survey of Oncologists, Neurologists, Rheumatologists, Nephrologists, and Infectious Disease Specialists Regarding Access to Specialty Medications**

**November 6-20, 2013**

North Star Opinion Research conducted a national online survey of 500 physicians in the rheumatology, nephrology, infectious disease, oncology, and neurology specialties who prescribe specialty medications. The results show high levels of usage and satisfaction with specialty pharmacies, and two-thirds of those who work with specialty pharmacies think only some or none of traditional drug stores have the expertise to provide the range of specialty medications to patients. More detailed results from the survey include:

- 1. Oncologists, Neurologists, Rheumatologists, Nephrologists, and Infectious Disease specialists say their patients have access to specialty medications from a variety of sources.** Thirty percent say their patients typically get their specialty medications from a specialty pharmacy, compared to 21 percent from a drugstore, 10 percent from a doctor's office or practice, 8 percent from an outpatient clinic and 6 percent from a mail service pharmacy, with 22 percent saying patients get their medications from a combination of sources.
- 2. Only five percent of the specialists who work with specialty pharmacies believe that all drugstores “*have the expertise and capability to provide the different types of specialty medications to patients.*”** Five percent of these physicians say all traditional drugstores have the expertise and capability to provide these specialty drugs and 25 percent say most do, while 66 percent say some do and 2 percent say none.
- 3. Specialists who work with specialty pharmacies are overwhelmingly satisfied with their services.** Sixty-six percent of the specialists in these fields who prescribe specialty medications work with specialty pharmacies, and they are satisfied with the specialty pharmacy services by an 89 to 7 percent margin.
- 4. Specialists think drug companies should offer discounts to individuals who can't afford expensive specialty drugs, instead of making small businesses offer low copays.** Only 35 percent of the specialists in these fields believe that small businesses should be required to have lower copays for expensive specialty medications, while 45 percent believe drug companies should be required to offer discounts to individuals who cannot afford the drugs.

## ***Methodology***

This survey of 500 physicians in the rheumatology, nephrology, infectious disease, oncology, and neurology specialties was conducted online November 6-20, 2013. Respondents were selected randomly from a list of physicians in these specialties obtained from Survey Sampling International, and were screened to verify the physician or their practice prescribe specialty medications.

The margin of error for responses with an even split – 50 percent for one response and 50 percent for another response – is plus or minus 4.38 percent. The margin of error is higher for subgroups of the sample. The margin of error is smaller when one response receives a higher level of support. For example, the margin of error is plus or minus 3.80 percent when 75 percent of respondents choose one response and 25 percent choose another response.