



# Pharmacy Payments in the Oregon Workers' Compensation System, First Quarter 2004

Department of Consumer & Business Services

May 2005

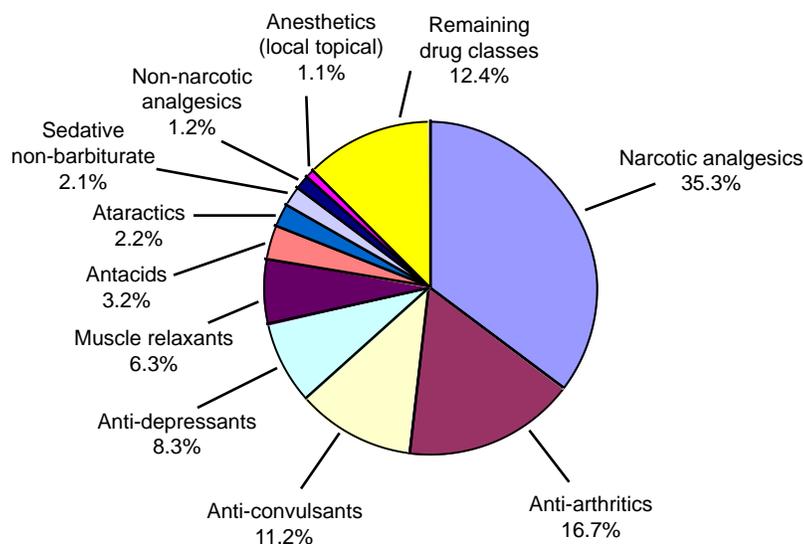
The estimated medical payments for treating injured workers during the first calendar quarter of 2004 totaled \$66,215,300. This represents a 12 percent increase from the estimated \$59,090,500 in total medical payments reported during the first calendar quarter of 2002.<sup>1</sup> Estimated pharmacy payments totaled \$4,106,900 (6.2 percent of total medical payments), up from \$3,604,500 (6.1%) in the first quarter of 2002.

Figure 1 breaks down pharmacy payments by drug class (also known as drug category). A drug class contains drugs with similar actions and uses. Narcotic analgesics continue to rank first among the drug classes dispensed to injured workers, receiving more than one-third of pharmacy payments. Narcotic analgesic payments are followed by anti-arthritics (also known as anti-inflammatories) and anti-convulsants (anti-seizure medications), at 16.7 and 11.2 percent of total pharmacy payments, respectively.<sup>2</sup>

On the following page, Table 1 shows the top pharmacy payments by drug name and pharmacy payments. In 2004, oxycodone HCL, a narcotic analgesic (pain reliever) continued to receive the highest aggregate payment, representing 15.9 percent of pharmacy payments. The top 25 drugs, as a whole, represented nearly 70 percent of pharmacy payments.

Further analysis of workers' compensation pharmacy data shows a higher use of generic drugs than in general health care. In 2004, generic drugs represented 56 percent of dispensed prescriptions in general health care, representing 17 percent of the total dollars spent on dispensed prescriptions.<sup>3</sup> In Oregon's workers' compensation system, generic drugs represented 67 percent of dispensed prescriptions and 26 percent of the total dollars spent on prescriptions in the first quarter of 2004, compared with 62 percent and 26 percent, respectively, in the first quarter of 2002. Additionally, when generic and brand name versions of a drug within the top five drug classes are both available, the generic is dispensed more than 90 percent of the time. Because the top five drug classes contribute over four-fifths of the total dollars, the workers' compensation system has experienced significant cost savings as a result of generic drug utilization.<sup>4</sup>

**Figure 1. Top drug classes by pharmacy payments, first quarter 2004**



Note: Percents may not total 100 due to rounding.

<sup>1</sup> See [Medical Payments in the Oregon Workers' Compensation System, First Quarter 2002](#), Department of Consumer & Business Services (October 2004).

<sup>2</sup> It is common for anti-convulsants, most often Neurontin, to be prescribed for purposes other than seizure suppression; typically for "off-label" use in relieving neuropathic and neurogenic pain and in migraine prophylaxis. The FDA approves a drug for a specific, labeled purpose, but some drug references, such as the *Physicians' Desktop Reference*, provide alternative, "off-label" purposes.

<sup>3</sup> See IMS Health, a pharmaceutical information and consulting company, National Prescription Audit Plus™ and National Sales Perspectives™, (March 2005).

<sup>4</sup> See [Brand and Generic Drug Utilization in Oregon's Workers' Compensation System, First Quarter 2002](#), Department of Consumer & Business Services (August 2004).

**Table 1. Top 25 drug names by pharmacy payment**

Rank	Drug name	Drug class	Product name	Generic or brand drug	Total payments	Percent payments
1	Oxycodone HCL	Narcotic analgesics	Oxycodone HCL	Generic	\$30,500	0.7%
			Oxycontin, Roxicodone, OxyFast, OxyIR	Brand	\$624,100	15.2%
					<b>\$654,600</b>	<b>15.9%</b>
2	Gabapentin	Anti-convulsants	Neurontin	Brand	<b>\$354,500</b>	<b>8.6%</b>
3	Celecoxib	Anti-arthritis	Celebrex	Brand	<b>\$231,100</b>	<b>5.6%</b>
4	Hydrocodone bitartrate w/ acetaminophen	Narcotic analgesics	Hydrocodone bitartrate w/ acetaminophen	Generic	\$186,600	4.5%
			Norco, Lortab, Vicodin (ES and HP), Lorcet	Brand	\$13,700	0.3%
					<b>\$200,300</b>	<b>4.9%</b>
5	Fentanyl	Narcotic analgesics	Duragesic	Brand	<b>\$181,600</b>	<b>4.4%</b>
6	Rofecoxib	Anti-arthritis	Vioxx	Brand	\$173,700	4.2%
7	Morphine Sulfate	Narcotic analgesics	Morphine Sulfate	Generic	\$78,500	1.9%
			Kadian, MS Contin, Avinza	Brand	\$62,600	1.5%
					<b>\$141,100</b>	<b>3.4%</b>
8	Valdecoxib	Anti-arthritis	Bextra	Brand	<b>\$104,300</b>	<b>2.5%</b>
9	Venlafaxine HCL	Anti-depressants	Effexor (XR)	Brand	<b>\$72,500</b>	<b>1.8%</b>
10	Metaxalone	Muscle relaxants	Skelaxin	Brand	<b>\$68,500</b>	<b>1.7%</b>
11	Oxycodone HCL w/ acetaminophen	Narcotic analgesics	Oxycodone HCL w/ acetaminophen	Generic	\$47,900	1.2%
			Percocet, Tylox	Brand	\$19,700	0.5%
					<b>\$67,600</b>	<b>1.6%</b>
12	Zolpidem Tartrate	Sedative non-barbiturate	Ambien	Brand	<b>\$66,100</b>	<b>1.6%</b>
13	Cyclobenzaprine HCL	Muscle relaxants	Cyclobenzaprine HCL	Generic	\$58,100	1.4%
			Flexeril	Brand	\$5,100	0.1%
					<b>\$63,200</b>	<b>1.5%</b>
14	Tizanidine HCL	Muscle relaxants	Tizanidine HCL	Generic	\$45,500	1.1%
			Zanaflex	Brand	\$6,400	0.2%
					<b>\$51,900</b>	<b>1.3%</b>
15	Sertraline HCL	Anti-depressants	Zoloft	Brand	<b>\$49,500</b>	<b>1.2%</b>
16	Lidocaine	Anesthetics (local topical)	Lidoderm	Brand	<b>\$43,000</b>	<b>1.0%</b>
17	Tramadol HCL	Narcotic analgesics	Tramadol HCL	Generic	\$27,200	0.7%
			Ultram	Brand	\$11,500	0.3%
					<b>\$38,700</b>	<b>0.9%</b>
18	Paroxetine HCL	Anti-depressants	Paroxetine HCL	Generic	\$27,000	0.7%
			Paxil (CR)	Brand	\$11,500	0.3%
					<b>\$38,500</b>	<b>0.9%</b>
19	Omeprazole	Antacids	Omeprazole	Generic	\$29,100	0.7%
			Prilosec	Brand	\$7,700	0.2%
					<b>\$36,800</b>	<b>0.9%</b>
20	Bupropion HCL	Anti-depressants	Bupropion HCL	Generic	\$2,500	0.1%
			Wellbutrin (SR and XL)	Brand	\$33,900	0.8%
					<b>\$36,400</b>	<b>0.9%</b>
21	Nabumetone	Anti-arthritis	Nabumetone	Generic	\$30,900	0.8%
			Relafen	Brand	\$2,500	0.1%
					<b>\$33,400</b>	<b>0.8%</b>
22	Naproxen	Anti-arthritis	Naproxen	Generic	\$30,900	0.8%
			Naprosyn	Brand	\$400	0.0%
					<b>\$31,300</b>	<b>0.8%</b>
23	Carisoprodol	Muscle relaxants	Carisoprodol	Generic	\$26,900	0.7%
			Soma	Brand	\$3,700	0.1%
					<b>\$30,600</b>	<b>0.7%</b>
24	Propoxyphene napsylate w/ acetaminophen	Narcotic analgesics	Propoxyphene napsylate w/ acetaminophen	Generic	\$26,800	0.7%
			Darvocet	Brand	\$3,900	0.1%
					<b>\$30,700</b>	<b>0.7%</b>
25	Tramadol HCL w/ acetaminophen	Narcotic analgesics	Ultracet	Brand	<b>\$29,800</b>	<b>0.7%</b>
<b>Subtotal</b>					<b>\$2,829,900</b>	<b>68.9%</b>
<b>Remaining pharmacy payments</b>					<b>\$1,277,000</b>	<b>31.1%</b>
<b>Total</b>					<b>\$4,106,900</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Note: Drug payment figures are rounded to the nearest hundred; figures and percents may not add to totals due to rounding.

*If you have questions about the information contained in this document, please contact by e-mail or phone: [Nathan Johnson](mailto:Nathan.Johnson@dcbs.oregon.gov), Research Analyst, (503) 947-7194, Research & Analysis Section, Information Management Division.*

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), this publication is available in alternative formats. Please call (503) 378-4100 (V/TTY).

*The information in this report is in the public domain and may be reprinted without permission. Visit the DCBS Web site, <http://dcbs.oregon.gov>.*

*To receive electronic notification of new publications, see the Information Management WebBoard, <http://www.cbs.state.or.us/imd/notifv.html>.*