Preliminary evaluation of perceptions surrounding biosimilar landscape, uptake, and adoption among pediatric hospitals and health systems in the United States

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Background and objective

- The overall utilization of biosimilars has increased drastically in the United States.[1] However, there may still be hesitation to use these therapies in pediatric populations due to limited safety and efficacy data.[2]
- The objective of the current study is to assess the perceptions of biosimilar uptake and adoption among healthcare decision makers at pediatric hospitals and health systems.

Methods

- Web-based surveys were fielded to hospital and health system leadership team members identified by AmerisourceBergen's Pediatric Service Line from September 13 to October 2, 2022.
- The survey assessed their organizations' policies on using biosimilars and barriers to biosimilar adoption and identified opportunities and interest in receiving supplemental benchmarking data, education, and tools on biosimilars.
- Findings were summarized using descriptive statistics.

Limitations

- This research reflects the perspectives of 6 hospital and health system leadership team members identified by AmerisourceBergen's Pediatric Service Line. Other team members within the same organization may have opinions that differ from those depicted in this study.
- Half of the survey respondents were pharmacy directors compared to other roles of director of business operations, clinical pharmacy manager, and assistant director for pediatric pharmacy services, which could affect the generalizability of results.
- Given that surveys were fielded over roughly 1-month periods in September 2022 and October 2022, responses could differ over time with the evolving biosimilars landscape and organizational management strategies.

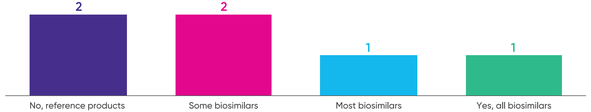
Conclusions

- The results suggest that biosimilars are used within pediatric hospitals and health systems, and there are generally positive perceptions regarding their adoption and uptake.
- The evaluation underscores the importance of stakeholders, such as biopharmaceutical companies, in disseminating clinical and real-world data on pediatric patient populations and providing cost savings to hospitals and health systems to improve utilization of biosimilars. FormularyDecisions® is a secure platform that biopharmaceutical companies can leverage to facilitate the exchange of information with healthcare decision makers to support the product evaluation process.
- Future research will be critical to better understand the developing landscape for the uptake and adoption of biosimilars among pediatric hospitals and health systems in the United States.

Results

- Six individuals participated in the survey: 3 pharmacy directors, 1 director of business operations, 1 clinical pharmacy manager, and 1 assistant director for pediatric pharmacy services.
- All 6 respondents' organizations procured biosimilars but only had some available on hand. All respondents noted that their organizations are actively discussing adding biosimilars to their formularies.
- The majority of respondents (4/6) reported that some, most, or all biosimilars are preferred over reference products, and respondents are or would consider contracting with biosimilar manufacturers (**Figure 1**).

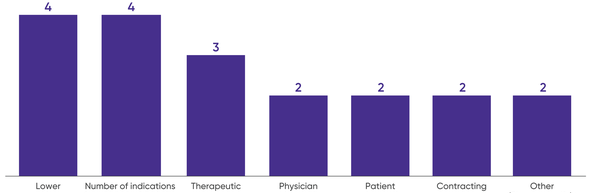
Figure 1. Preference regarding biosimilars or reference product (N=6)



Q: Does your organization prefer biosimilars over reference products?

- When considering the designation of a preferred product, a lower price (4/6), the number of indications (4/6), and therapeutic area (3/6) were noted as the most influential areas in decision making (**Figure 2**).

Figure 2. Influential areas of decision making when considering the designation of a preferred product[a,b] (N=6)

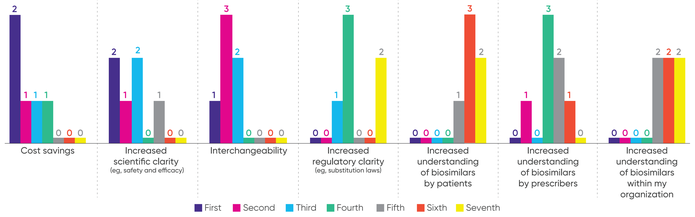


[a] Other responses included "payer policy" and "prior authorization."
[b] No respondents indicated that the "length of time the biosimilar has been on the market" impacted their consideration of designating a preferred product.

Q: Which of the following, if any, influences your decisions to designate a preferred product (reference product or biosimilar) when 1 or more biosimilars are available? Please select all that apply.

- All respondents ranked cost savings and scientific clarity (eg, safety and efficacy data) as the top 2 factors driving the adoption of biosimilars in their organizations (**Figure 3**).

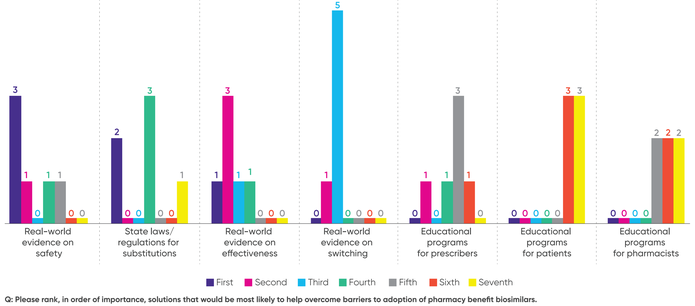
Figure 3. Factors driving the adoption of biosimilars in respondents' organizations (N=6)



Q: Please rank, in order of importance, the following factors that would help drive adoption of biosimilars within your organization.

- The top recommended solutions for overcoming barriers to adoption of pharmacy benefit biosimilars were real-world evidence on safety and effectiveness in the pediatric population and state laws and regulations for substitution (**Figure 4**).

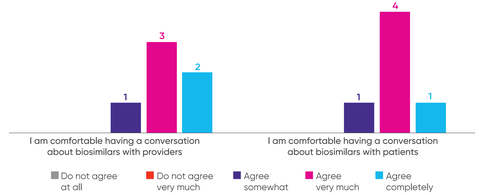
Figure 4. Solutions most likely to help in overcoming barriers to adoption of pharmacy benefit biosimilars (N=6)



Q: Please rank, in order of importance, solutions that would be most likely to help overcome barriers to adoption of pharmacy benefit biosimilars.

- All respondents were at least somewhat comfortable having conversations with patients and providers on biosimilars, with 5/6 reporting that they were very much or completely comfortable (**Figure 5**).

Figure 5. Level of comfort in discussing biosimilars with providers and patients[a] (N=6)

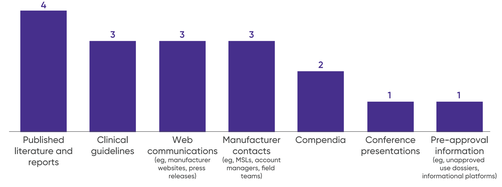


[a] No respondents chose "do not agree at all" or "do not agree very much."

Q: Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements.

- Respondents reported that their most frequently used resources when evaluating the biosimilar pipeline were published literature and reports (4/6), clinical guidelines (3/6), web communications (3/6), and their manufacturer contacts (3/6) (**Figure 6**).

Figure 6. Sources for reviewing the biosimilar pipeline[a] (N=6)



[a] No respondents chose "subscription-based drug intelligence platforms."

Q: What are the top evidence sources your organization utilizes in your review of the biosimilar pipeline? Please select up to 3.

References: 1. Stern AD, Chen JL, Ouellet M, et al. Biosimilars and follow-on products in the United States: adoption, prices, and users. *Health Aff (Millwood).* 2021;40(6):989-999. doi:10.1377/hlthaff.2020.02239. **2.** Wild D. Navigating the complexities of biosimilar use in pediatrics. Pharmacy Practice News. 2022. https://www.pharmacypracticenews.com/Clinical/Article/04-22/Navigating-the-Complexities-Of-Biosimilar-Use-in-Pediatrics/66552

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