

Employee Benefits & Precision Medicine: What HR Leaders Need to Know

Insight on optimizing employee health and slashing healthcare costs



Innovation in healthcare benefits is booming. However, one particular healthcare technology has begun to emerge as a bona fide game-changer for employers, their population health efforts, and their bottom line: pharmacogenomics.

Pharmacogenomics, or PGx, centers on the science of how a person's genes impact his or her response to medication. Many people don't know that DNA can affect whether hundreds of medications work (or not) for any given individual and if they are safe to take (or likely to cause potentially dangerous adverse drug events). That's because natural variation in our genetic code can cause the same drug to produce different effects on different people.

With more than 60 percent of adults taking at least one prescription medication and [25 percent](#) of adults taking more than four prescription medications, there is tangible opportunity for HR and benefits leaders to leverage this reality to optimize employee health – and slash healthcare costs.

While the value of PGx for improving individual health has long been recognized, new PGx-empowered medication safety benefit programs are finally unlocking the power of precision medicine for large organizations and their teams around the world.

Why is the potential for PGx-empowered medication safety benefit programs so enormous for employers?

Among the top reasons are that they can:

- **Measurably improve population health**

Coriell Life Sciences' [Corigen® Medication Safety Program](#) enables employees and their physicians to identify the safest and most effective medications *for them* based on their unique DNA. It also factors in other medications a person may be taking, lifestyle factors, and dozens of other variables that impact how a drug behaves in the body. This can improve day-to-day quality of life ... and have a life-changing impact.

"I had previously been taking different antidepressant meds for 15 years for severe depression and hospitalization. Once I received results, my med changed from SSNI to SNRI meds, and I have never felt better. My family, friends, and neighbors have been overjoyed with the change," noted one program

participant.

At scale, these benefits multiply quickly. In fact, organizations that have rolled out Corigen® to their employee/member populations have seen a 22 percent reduction in hospitalizations for covered individuals – and that’s just one metric of success.

- **Eliminate unnecessary healthcare costs**

PGx-empowered medication safety programs streamline the standard of care, as well as needless physician office visits and wasted resources associated with the laborious process of trial-and-error prescribing.

For example, the sponsoring organization of a flagship **Corigen® program has realized an average charged-to-plan savings of \$7,000 per member** in the first 32 months of the program’s implementation. This number only continues to grow.

- **Help employers recruit and retain talent with cutting-edge benefits**

Amid a tight labor market and fierce competition for top talent, innovative organizations – from healthcare companies to hospitality chains – are leveraging PGx programs to distinguish their leadership in the realm of employee health. This aligns with [data](#) that shows 78 percent of adults cite healthcare benefits as a key factor in deciding where they work.

- **Be implemented and managed easily**

With Corigen®, a dedicated CLS team makes implementation and program management easy. With a focus on delivering outcomes and ROI, we take care of everything, including:

- An initial ROI assessment that helps leaders make informed decisions about the implementation of a medication safety program
- Employee/member engagement and communications
- At-home genetic testing
- Actionable reports for individuals and their healthcare providers
- Detailed reporting

