

Physician Views: What drives physician brand loyalty in the ultra-competitive multiple sclerosis market?

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Abstracts

The multiple sclerosis market is arguably one of the most competitive in pharma, shaped in part by a handful of products (Avonex, Betaseron, Copaxone and Rebif) that are both effective, very well established and which deliver broadly comparable efficacy. In more recent years, an 'oral revolution' has advanced the therapeutic optionality for MS patients, but simultaneously left room for further improvements.

As patients await the next generation of therapies to emerge from the clinic – potentially improving care in certain subtypes of the disease or facilitating the repair of damage caused by MS – another dynamic is likely to emerge via the potential launch of generic Copaxone products.

Despite the competitive nature of this disease market, prices for MS drugs have risen notably in recent years; a recently published (by Bloomberg) list of 73 drugs that have seen a US list price increase of 75 percent or more since 2007 included five of the most widely prescribed MS drugs.

With the potential launch of generic Copaxone set to provide some form of platform for pricing pressure, will other factors that have driven brand loyalty in MS be overlooked or will the dynamics that have allowed this therapy to persist as one the strongest growing in recent years remain in place?

Against this backdrop, FirstWord polled 186 neurologists based in the US and EU5 to ask them a series of questions about their approach to using MS therapies. Specifically we asked them

How they rate their personal level of loyalty to the MS treatments they



prescribe?

In what segment of the MS market is their loyalty to particular products strongest?

What a new therapy would need to demonstrate versus existing treatments to change their prescribing habits?

What clinical attribute (apart from efficacy) they believe is the most important differentiator between approved MS therapies?

What commercial attribute they believe is the most important differentiator between approved MS therapies?



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