



**AmerisourceBergen**

Xcenda

# Improving collaboration between oncologists and payers

How Xcenda affirmed a manufacturer's position as innovator and thought-leader, and built trust between payers and oncologists

**Case study**



## The client situation

Although all stakeholders recognized that productive dialogue related to improving clinical pathways would lead to more informed coverage decisions, physicians and payer decision makers from national and large regional plans lacked a structured forum in which to have candid discussions. Xcenda proposed a national strategy council composed of strategic thinkers, effective communicators, and collaborative advisors, all committed on a long-term basis, to finding solutions validated by data.

# The Xcenda solution

A multidisciplinary team of Xcenda's specialists developed a unique program that allowed the manufacturer to play the role of mediator and open a dialogue between physicians and payers who shared common objectives:

- Cost-effective treatment
- Equitable reimbursement
- Superior patient care

Leveraging Xcenda's proprietary market research collaborations with oncologists, hematologists, and payers, the national strategy council included:

- 18 oncology practices with 200 physicians overseeing 250,000 patients
- 18 payers that have a combined 38.5 million covered lives

Utilizing real-time tools, such as audience response system technology at live meetings, and employing online surveys, physician and payer participants offered their thoughts frequently and organically.

## The outcome

The national strategy council focused on proposing pilot initiatives that would produce measurable results, including one that identified clinical guideline adherence as a primary method for decreasing variability of care. By leading the formation of the strategy council and facilitating a growing trust and collaboration between physicians and payers, the manufacturer affirmed its position as a thought-leader, an innovator, and an organization dedicated to improving cancer care.

## Finding common ground for common goals

Increased payer management on specialty pharmaceuticals, including prior authorizations, higher out-of-pocket costs, and reduced reimbursement levels, threatened to limit patient access for this global manufacturer's physician-administered oncology products. Faced with this all-too-common challenge, the manufacturer turned to Xcenda for an uncommon solution—one that emphasized finding common ground and facilitating productive dialogue between payers and oncologists.

## Trust equals results

Physicians and payers who took part in the manufacturer's program all recognized that the current system for cancer care and reimbursement is unsustainable. They shared concern over the rising cost of cancer treatment. They all pointed to decreasing variability in cancer treatment as a key priority. Still, a large challenge remained: the fundamental lack of trust between payers and physicians. Physicians felt that some payers made reimbursement decisions without adequate clinical knowledge, while payers felt that financial considerations motivated treatment decisions among some physicians.

To address this, program moderators from Xcenda's market research team encouraged participants to create a shared vision and common action items. Words like "sustainable" and "measurable," combined with "patient-centric" and "aligned incentives," formed the strategy council's vision. Action items focused on reducing variability of care and on ensuring education for all stakeholders.

Armed with these shared objectives, the strategy council participants then proposed pilot initiatives that would produce measurable results, including one that identifies clinical guideline adherence as a primary method for decreasing variability of care. In this pilot, a large oncology practice would focus on supportive care for patients with breast, lung, and colorectal cancers. Metrics would include clinical guideline adherence, reduced emergency room and hospital utilization, and patient satisfaction. Incentives from participating payers could include bonus payments based on a percentage of calculated savings or offering a differential fee schedule.

The strategy council demonstrated that a manufacturer can facilitate solutions that address the legitimate needs of all stakeholders.

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