

CuraLinc Addresses Problems Associated with the High Usage of Psychotropic Medications

By CuraLinc

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PharmaLinc, CuraLinc Healthcare's Pharmacy Intervention Program, provides client organizations with a solution to the problem of rising prescription drug costs.

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August 25, 2008. (Chicago, IL.) PharmaLinc, CuraLinc Healthcare's Pharmacy Intervention Program, provides client organizations with a solution to the problem of rising prescription drug costs. By addressing the problems associated with the prescription of psychotropic medications, especially in a general medical setting, PharmaLinc directly impacts quality of care issues, which results in a reduction of healthcare, pharmacy and disability costs, and an increase in employee productivity.

"As people seek mental health treatment, many of them turn to their general practitioner who, in turn, prescribes medications that may be unnecessary or ineffective. In certain situations, counseling for anxiety may be a better solution than medication," notes John Kamilis, Director of Clinical Services at CuraLinc. "In other cases, particularly those that deal with depression, counseling combined with medication is more effective than only one or the other. PharmaLinc is designed to help clients identify the most effective treatment for their mental health issues, whether it's counseling only, medication management by a psychiatrist, or both."

In 2007, U.S. adults spent more money on antidepressants and other psychotropics than any other drug category. Five out of six users of psychotropic medications had their drugs prescribed by a general practitioner (Medco, 2008). Unfortunately, the majority of general practitioners are not adequately trained in behavioral health issues or treatment, many having no formal training beyond the material marketed with the medication. Furthermore, most general practitioners are not qualified to recognize dependency-related issues associated with the use of these types of medications. These issues lead to a higher number of emergency room and doctor's visits, which ultimately drive up health care premiums and disability costs, and impede productivity via increased absenteeism and presenteeism.

PharmaLinc addresses these issues head-on by:

- Educating members who were prescribed a psychotropic drug in a general medical setting
- Working with both the member and the physician to build a treatment plan that is most appropriate for the situation
- Providing behavioral health counseling to support members who are taking psychotropic medication

Through comprehensive assessments by licensed behavioral health clinicians, who undergo regular training in psychopharmacotherapy, PharmaLinc determines the appropriateness of the current treatment given the member's condition. The clinician may suggest short-term counseling through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) as a complement to (or in lieu of) the medication, or help the member find a psychiatrist who can more appropriately treat the member's condition. Once the clinician determines the

most effective course of treatment, PharmaLinc will work with the member and the physician to develop a more suitable treatment plan for the member. The end result of the program is a reduction in prescription drug costs, an increase in member productivity and an increase in the utilization and awareness of the EAP.

PharmaLinc is a product offered by CuraLinc Healthcare, a privately-owned behavioral health and wellness provider, based in Chicago, Illinois. For more information, please visit www.curalinc.com, email info@curalinc.com, or call 800.490.1585.

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About PharmaLinc: PharmaLinc is a product offered by CuraLinc Healthcare, a privately-owned behavioral health and wellness provider, based in Chicago, Illinois.

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