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# Where Do Real-Time Prescription Benefit Tools Fit in the Landscape of High US Prescription Medication Costs? A Narrative Review

Rachel Wong <sup>1</sup>, Tanvi Mehta <sup>2</sup>, Bradley Very <sup>3</sup>, Jing Luo <sup>3</sup>, Kristian Feterik <sup>3</sup>, Bradley H Crotty <sup>4</sup>, Jeremy A Epstein <sup>5</sup>, Michael J Flotsos <sup>6</sup>, Nitu Kashyap <sup>7</sup> <sup>8</sup>, Erika Smith <sup>4</sup>, Fasika A Woreta <sup>9</sup>, Jeremy I Schwartz <sup>10</sup>

Affiliations

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## Abstract

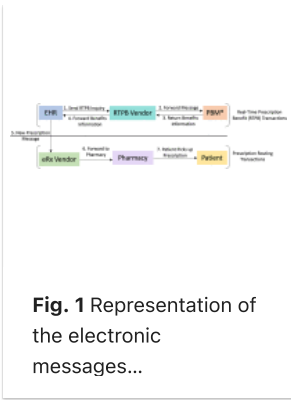
The problem of unaffordable prescription medications in the United States is complex and can result in poor patient adherence to therapy, worse clinical outcomes, and high costs to the healthcare system. While providers are aware of the financial burden of healthcare for patients, there is a lack of actionable price transparency at the point of prescribing. Real-time prescription benefit (RTPB) tools are new electronic clinical decision support tools that retrieve patient- and medication-specific out-of-pocket cost information and display it to clinicians at the point of prescribing. The rise in US healthcare costs has been a major driver for efforts to increase medication price transparency, and mandates from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services for Medicare Part D sponsors to adopt RTPB tools may spur integration of such tools into electronic health records. Although multiple factors affect the implementation of RTPB tools, there is limited evidence on outcomes. Further research will be needed to understand the impact of RTPB tools on end results such as prescribing behavior, out-of-pocket medication costs for patients, and adherence to pharmacologic treatment. We review the terminology and concepts essential in understanding the landscape of RTPB tools, implementation considerations, barriers to adoption, and directions for future research that will be important to patients, prescribers, health systems, and insurers.

**Keywords:** Cost of care; Formulary decision support; Medication price transparency; Prescription medication costs; Real-time prescription benefit tools.

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## Figures

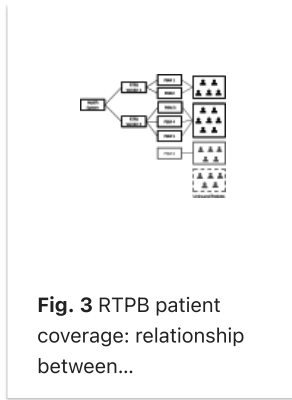


**Fig. 1** Representation of the electronic messages...

The screenshot shows a 'Prescription Benefit Advisor' window with a table of medication data. The table has columns for 'Drug', 'Form', 'Package', 'Quantity', 'Unit of Measure', and 'Notes'. The data rows include:

Drug	Form	Package	Quantity	Unit of Measure	Notes
Hydrocodone	Tablet	30	30	Tablets	
Hydrocodone	Tablet	30	30	Tablets	
Hydrocodone	Tablet	30	30	Tablets	
Hydrocodone	Tablet	30	30	Tablets	

**Fig. 2** Representation of RTPB information displayed...



**Fig. 3** RTPB patient coverage: relationship between...

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