

Report: Exchanges yield more specialty drug use

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The nation's largest pharmacy benefits manager says that patients from the health care overhaul's new insurance exchanges have been more likely to use expensive specialty drugs for chronic conditions.

Express Scripts said Wednesday that just over 1 percent of the prescriptions it processed from exchange enrollees in January and February were for specialty medicines. That compares with less than 1 percent of patients with commercial [health](#) plans.

Specialty drugs account for more than a quarter of the country's pharmacy spending, says Express Scripts, even though they total less than 1 percent of all [prescriptions](#).

Express Scripts Holding Co. runs prescription drug plans for employers, insurers and other clients.

The overhaul launched a major coverage expansion earlier this year with the debut of state-based health insurance exchanges.

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