

Discount generic drug programs grow over time

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Generic discount drug programs (GDDPs, which charge nominal fees to fill prescriptions) have grown over time and their initial lower use by racial/ethnic minorities has evaporated, writes author Song Hee Hong, Ph.D., of the University of Tennessee Health Science Center, Memphis, and Sunghee H. Tak, Ph.D., M.P.H., R.N., of the University of Memphis, Tennessee.

GDDPS can reduce medication costs and help patients get their drug therapy. However, the initial use of GDDPs was low in 2007 at 3.6 percent of patients receiving any [prescription drugs](#), especially among minorities.

The authors used data from the Medical Expenditure Panel Survey for their research letter to examine the use of GDDPs as the program matured since being introduced in 2006 at Walmart and now provided by other retailers.

Of the 13,486 adults who in 2010 had at least one prescription, 3,208 of them were GDDP users for a weighted rate of 23.1 percent. Use of the GDDP was more likely among elderly, sicker and uninsured groups, as well as by people living in rural areas and central regions of the United States. However, the rate of GDDP use was not significantly different across educational level, income and racial/ethnic groups.

"The lower use of GDDPs among racial/ethnic minorities observed when the program was deployed no longer existed when the program

matured."

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