

Health insurers recruiting former pharma reps to cut costs

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(HealthDay)—Health insurers are recruiting former pharmaceutical

company representatives to educate doctors and help save money on prescription medications, according to a report published June 8 in *Kaiser Health News*.

Noting that costs for [prescription drugs](#) have been rising faster than those for any other health segment, [health plans](#) and others paying those costs are trying to address the increases.

Capital District Physicians' Health Plan (CDPHP), an Albany, N.Y., insurer, is hiring former pharma representatives and staffing a sales force to develop cost-effective medicine. They have been able to address rising costs of [prescription medications](#), such as Glumetza (metformin hydrochloride), manufactured by Valeant Pharmaceuticals, which reached a price of \$81,270 per year. When CDPHP doctors were informed of the price, most of the 60 plan members who were taking Glumetza were switched to the generic alternative, saving \$5 million in one year.

"Insurers are taking matters into their own hands," said Lea Prevel Katsanis, a marketing professor at Concordia University in Montreal, according to the article. "They're saying, 'We can't really rely on drug companies to talk to doctors about what's cost-efficient.'"

More information: [More Information](#)

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