Express Scripts to Continue With AbbVie Hepatitis C Drugs

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Express Scripts Holding, the largest pharmacy benefits manager in the United States, will continue making available AbbVie's hepatitis C virus (HCV) treatments, despite recent warnings from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) that the drugs carry a potential risk for liver injury, Medscape reports.

In December 2014, Express Scripts decided to favor AbbVie's combination hep C treatment Viekira Pak (ombitasvir/paritaprevir/ritonavir; dasabuvir) over Gilead Sciences' comparable hep C cures to obtain a better price for its beneficiaries.

However, in late October, federal health authorities reported that Viekira Pak and AbbVie's next-generation combo Technivie (ombitasvir/paritaprevir/ritonavir) were causing hepatic decompensation and liver failure in several patients with cirrhosis who were taking the drugs. The FDA has since advised AbbVie to include new warnings on its drug labels about these potential risks.

Despite speculation that the pharmacy group might drop AbbVie's regimens, Express Scripts has stated that they will maintain the status quo for now, and continue offering exclusive pre-authorized access to AbbVie treatments for patients for whom it is safe and effective.

For more information about the Viekira Pak and Technivie drug warnings, click here.

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