

Home infusion update

Published By HomeCare I.V. of Bend, Inc • 541.382.0287 • solutions@homecareiv.com

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New Therapy for MS

This is an exciting new treatment that has gained accelerated FDA approval because of its promising benefits to patients suffering relapsing forms of multiple sclerosis to reduce the frequency of clinical exacerbations. The drug is natalizumab, marketed under the name Tysabri™, pronounced *tie-SA-bree*.

Reports from the clinical trials are very positive. "Preliminary efficacy results showed a marked reduction (90%) in the formation of new gadolinium-enhancing lesions and reduced the number of patients with relapse by 50% in patients with relapsing-remitting or secondary progressive multiple sclerosisand has demonstrated a favorable safety profile." {Expert Rev. Neurotherapeutics 4(4), (2004)}

The therapy involves a one-hour infusion of 300mg, followed by a one hour observation period for the first few treatments. Less than 1% of patients demonstrated a hypersensitivity reaction, primarily because the monoclonal antibody is 95% humanized. The infusion is repeated every 4 weeks.

We are very excited to be able to provide this therapy for the MS patient population. We are the first infusion site for this new treatment in the area, and we are currently accepting patient referrals and scheduling appointments to begin therapy.

In the future, there may be more approved indications for Tysabri, with phase two trials currently researching Crohn's disease and Rheumatoid Arthritis.

Subcutaneous IgG Infusions

IVIG infusions are not always without side effects. Some patients experience severe headaches with every infusion, as well as other side effects, such as nausea, vomiting, and aseptic meningitis. Other patients may have been unable to receive IGIV because of poor venous access. The subcutaneous route might be considered as an option in these patients. It has several advantages to IVIG.

- Due to smaller, more frequent infusions, there is less variation of blood levels and elimination of low troughs between infusions.
- Patients can self-administer SCIG at home.
- Reduction of primary side effects, including headache, nausea and vomiting.

Currently there is no licensed product with a subcutaneous indication, but it has been used in clinical practice with success in pockets around the country. Any IVIG product can be used clinically by the subcutaneous route.

Reimbursement Issues

The Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act of 2003 signed into law late in 2003 is already having a significant impact on reimbursement for infusion drugs. The formula for payment of drugs covered (with limitations) under the prosthetic device benefit of Medicare Part B (parenteral/enteral nutrition, drugs for end-stage cancer pain management) remains unchanged. In 2005, however, there are significant changes in the works for other Part B covered drugs.

Under the Act, Part B covered drugs will be paid based on an Average Sales Price (ASP). ASP is the average of actual prices at which manufacturers sell their drugs. ASP includes all discounts, rebates and other manufacturer price considerations. Sales to government entities, such as the Veterans Administration, are excluded from the computation. In 2005, Medicare payment for Part B drugs will be 106% of ASP.

There's little doubt that commercial insurers will follow Medicare's lead in reducing payment for drugs. Providers seeing increases in fees for the service component of drug infusion therapies, the significance of which has, heretofore, gone generally unrecognized and either under or uncompensated, may be a likely result.

Caring for the Uninsured

Each year, HomeCare I.V. of Bend, Inc establishes a budget for the care of uninsured and under-insured patients. The amount of uncompensated care provided is based on a percentage of forecast revenues. In 2004 the amount set aside for uncompensated care was 10% of forecast gross revenue. The population of our service are includes a significant number of patients relying on Medicaid and Medicare for payment of their health care expenses. Unfortunately, Medicare does not cover most home infusion therapies and Medicaid has drastically reduced coverages for patients eligible only for the Standard package of benefits.

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Meet Our Staff.....

NURSES	Betsy N., Betsy Z., Mary
PHARMACISTS	Annette, Barb, Kerri
TECHNICIANS	April, Jeanette, Loretta
BILLING	Christine, Janet, Sherrie
RECEPTION	Anita
DELIVERY/WAREHOUSE	Melissa
OFFICE MANAGER	Ed
OFFICE TECH	Becky

Community Participation

●American Cancer Society Relay for Life 2004

HomeCare I.V. staff participated in the 2004 Relay for Life, putting together a team and earning contributions by holding a group "parking lot" sale and through individual donations. The team took turns on the track for the 24 hour period and raised money to support the American Cancer Society.

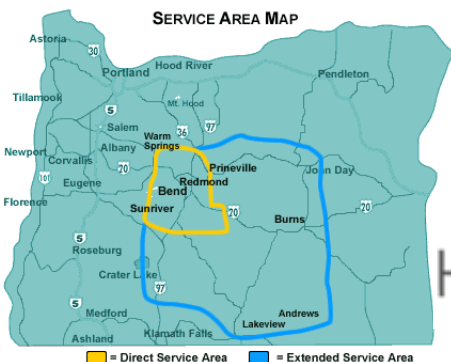
●Charity Golf Tournaments

HomeCare I.V. of Bend, Inc was a sponsor again this year of the Clear Choice Open. The golf tournament, also sponsored by [Clear Choice Health Plans](#) and held at Widgi Creek Golf Club in Bend, benefits the Heart Institute of the Cascades. The funds this year will be used to purchase portable, automated defibrillators. We also fielded a foursome of intrepid golfers that, to their great surprise and delight, finished first place in their 'B' (high handicap) flight.

The company also sponsored and participated in a golf event at Crooked River Ranch to benefit programs of the [Mountain View Hospital District](#) in Madras.

●Adopt-A-Family

Each holiday, our staff put together a holiday meal basket and gift card for two families on our service. It's a special time of year, but can also be a difficult time of year for many people struggling with illness and the economy. To try and help the families who can benefit the most, each staff member contributes to the Adopt-A-Family fund. The food baskets and gift cards are delivered, much to the surprise of the recipients. It's a small way that we can say thank you to the lives that touch us each week as we care for them.



Annual Open House 2004

Our annual open house was well attended, with wonderful food and beverages. We look forward to the event each year, and are grateful for all the caregivers, providers, patients, doctors, nurses and others who make it possible to serve our community's home infusion needs. The open house is an opportunity to come together and celebrate the year, and "put a face to a name" in some cases. Thank you for making this a great year for all of us!

If you didn't get a chance to attend in 2004, be sure to watch for your invitation this year!

Home Infusion Word Search

Find the following words across, up and down and sideways - just for fun!

Tysabri	multiple sclerosis	treat
subcutaneous	home infusion	antibiotic
PICC line	catheter	maintenance
Remicade	alarm	professional
rheumatoid	arthritis	CADD pump
dose	drug	Rx

T	S	U	O	E	N	A	T	U	C	B	U	S	T
Y	Y	R	E	M	I	C	A	D	E	I	A	M	Y
S	S	S	H	E	S	R	E	T	E	H	T	A	C
M	C	C	A	E	S	O	D	B	I	O	T	I	I
U	L	P	P	M	U	P	D	D	A	C	D	N	T
L	E	I	X	I	T	M	M	Y	T	R	D	T	O
T	R	H	S	Y	C	R	A	A	U	R	N	A	I
I	O	O	U	C	A	C	E	T	U	I	X	I	B
P	S	M	B	L	A	R	L	G	O	R	P	N	I
L	I	E	A	R	T	H	R	I	T	I	S	A	T
E	S	I	N	F	U	S	I	O	N	L	D	N	N
I	R	B	A	S	Y	T	Y	S	A	E	A	C	A
P	R	O	F	E	S	S	I	O	N	A	L	E	X



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