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News

Uptake drivers not performing 12.08.2019

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More biosimilars are flooding the market but latest PBS data shows the copies still look forward to a challenging uptake environment.

The newest data for the last quarter of etanercept uptake show there is still a vast gap between scripts for originator Pfizer's **Enbrel** and MSD's biosimilar **Brenzys**.

Uptake drivers implemented in December last year separated Enbrel and Brenzys prescriptions in the subsequent continuing phase of treatment in four adult indications, with Brenzys gaining streamlined authority in that phase instead of written authority.

The data for the latest quarter shows improvements in uptake of Brenzys but still at a slow pace. The drug now forms 15 per cent of total scripts in the treatment setting targeted by the uptake drivers, or around 2,700 scripts.

This leaves the largest portion of the pie to Enbrel, whose scripts in that setting still hover around the 15,500 mark.

Due to changes again made to prescribing authority in June 2019 allowing Brenzys to be accessed either through written or streamlined authority, some of the Enbrel data from the last quarter may include some prescriptions for Brenzys in the month of June.

But even taking that into account, the figures are not enough to show any massive swing towards uptake of Brenzys compared to the original.

Infliximab not any better

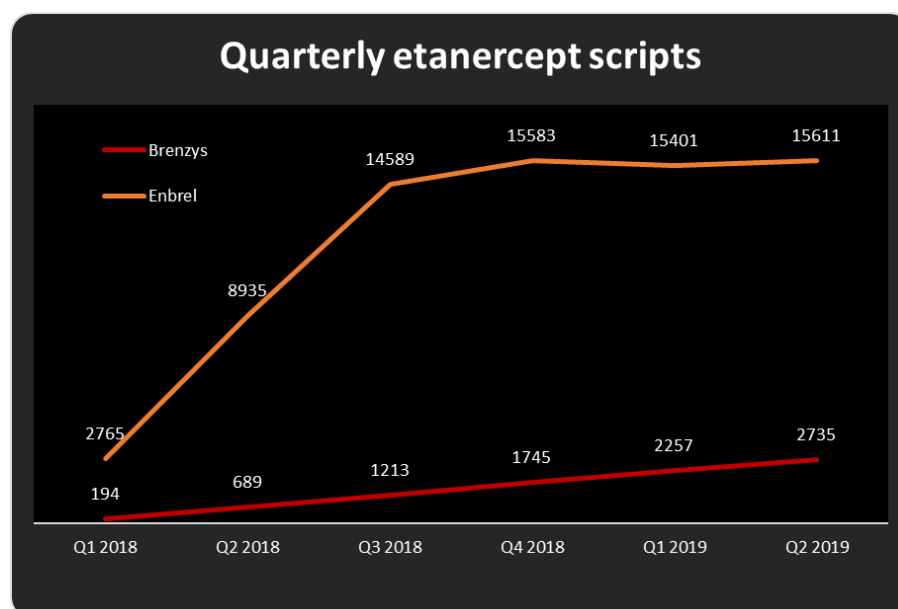
Meanwhile scripts over the first half of 2019 for infliximab show the gap between originator Janssen's **Remicade** and biosimilars **Renflexis** and **Inflectra** is similarly large.

Uptake drivers for the biosimilars were also put in place for the subsequent continuing phase of treatment, separating the two biosimilars from Remicade using a combination of streamlined and telephone authority, depending on indication.

Unlike uptake drivers for etanercept, these were implemented stepwise with a different indication targeted each month between July 2018 and January of this year.

But **Pharma in Focus'** analysis of scripts for the drug made in the first six months of 2019 show in general the biosimilars are getting around 13 per cent of scripts within those settings with uptake drivers.

Some indications are proving better for the copies than others, with biosimilars capturing 24 per cent of scripts in



paediatric Crohn's and ulcerative colitis.

Those indications with uptake drivers implemented from November 2018 have extremely low percentage of biosimilar uptake, potentially because these were more recent and have not yet made an impact.

Yajun Ma

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Uptake drivers and infliximab H1 2019				
Indication	Uptake driver date	Remicade scripts	Inflectra/Reflexis scripts	Biosimilar % of scripts
Severe Crohn's disease	Jul-18	7547	1091	13%
Complex refractory fistulating Crohn's disease	Aug-18	2496	369	13%
Paediatric Crohn's disease	Sep-18	516	163	24%
Ulcerative Colitis	Oct-18	1318	422	24%
Ankylosing Spondylitis	Nov-18	1268	28	2%
Rheumatoid Arthritis	Nov-18	266	5	2%
Psoriatic Arthritis	Dec-18	316	10	3%
Plaque Psoriasis	Jan-19	154	5	3%
Total		13881	2093	13%