

Pharmaceuticals: The Consumer - US - January 2014

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“The patent cliff, as well as a push toward consumers being more proactive about their health, has contributed to a decline in sales of pharmaceutical drugs. However, the ACA will provide more people with health insurance coverage, likely growing the market of prescription drug users.”

– Emily Krol, Health and Wellness Analyst

This report looks at the following areas:

- What effect will the ACA have on the prescription drug market?
- The “patent cliff” is affecting sales of pharmaceutical drugs
- Proactive consumers are diagnosing and treating their own health

The healthcare market, ever evolving, is on the cusp of major change. The ACA (Affordable Care Act) will change nearly every aspect of healthcare, while the “patent cliff” has and will continue to significantly impact the prescription-remedy market. This comes at a time when the US population is experiencing significant growth among the older population, resulting in an ever-increasing pharmaceutical user group.

After a period of consecutive growth, spending on prescription drugs declined for the first time in more than 50 years from 2011-12. Overall sales declined 1%, but the actual number of prescriptions dispensed increased 1.2%. This means that more consumers are likely choosing less expensive or generic prescriptions or that the number of prescription drugs people take has increased.

This report examines consumers' attitudes toward prescription drugs, and what impact the ACA will have on usage. The report will also discuss how an aging population will fuel the prescription drug market. Also discussed will be where people fill prescriptions, and how usage of online and mobile tools is growing. Further explored will be the phenomenon of self-diagnosis and self-care that is a result of advances in technology, such as telemedicine.

This report builds on the analysis presented in Mintel's *Pharmaceuticals: The Consumer – US, January 2013*, as well as Mintel's *Pharmaceuticals Consumer – US, March 2011*, and the January 2010 and February 2008 reports of the same title. Mintel's *Attitudes to Health and Pharmaceuticals – US, January 2005* and the February 2003 report of the same title also serve as a basis to the report.

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DID YOU KNOW?

This report is part of a series of reports, produced to provide you with a more holistic view of this market

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