



## Study: Ozempic distribution uneven, impacts weight loss drug access.

### Description

The surge in demand for popular prescription medications targeting diabetes, obesity, and heart disease has been remarkable in recent years. A recent study conducted by the University of Southern California revealed a staggering 442% increase in prescriptions for semaglutide between January 2021 and December 2023. Semaglutide is a key component in medications such as Ozempic, Rybelsus, and Wegovy, which are used to treat diabetes, obesity, and heart disease.

Despite the expanding list of medical applications for these drugs, patients are encountering challenges in getting their insurance providers to cover the costs, which can exceed \$10,000 annually. It is particularly concerning that individuals covered by Medicaid and Medicare constitute a small proportion of those receiving Ozempic and Wegovy prescriptions.

The USC study, recently published in JAMA Health Forum, sheds light on the disparities faced by Medicaid and Medicare beneficiaries in accessing these groundbreaking anti-obesity and diabetes treatments. Lead author Christopher Scannell highlighted the issue of access, stating that restricted access to these medications for certain patient populations, predominantly those with private insurance and more comprehensive health plans, excludes a significant percentage of the U.S. population.

An analysis by the non-profit Kaiser Family Foundation (KFF) found a substantial increase in federal spending on weight-loss drugs, with Medicare expenditures on medications like Ozempic and Rybelsus soaring from \$57 million in 2018 to \$5.7 billion in 2022. The potential for further growth in federal spending on these drugs is anticipated, with estimates suggesting that if just one in ten eligible adults were to use Wegovy for heart attack and stroke prevention, it could cost Medicare's Part D prescription drug coverage nearly \$3 billion annually.

Overall, the growing demand for these medications, combined with the intricate landscape of insurance coverage and healthcare disparities, underscores the importance of ensuring equitable access to life-saving treatments for all individuals, irrespective of their insurance status.

### Vocabulary List:

1. **Expenditures** /ɪk'spendɪtʃəz/ (noun): The action of spending funds or the amount of money spent.
2. **Medicaid** /'mɛdɪkeɪd/ (noun): A program that provides health coverage for low-income individuals and families.
3. **Beneficiaries** /ˌbɛnɪ'fɪj,ɛrɪz/ (noun): Individuals or groups that receive benefits often from government programs.
4. **Disparities** /dɪs'pærtɪz/ (noun): Differences or inequalities particularly in access to services or outcomes.
5. **Pharmaceutical** /ˌfɑːrmə'suːtɪkəl/ (adjective): Relating to the preparation use or sale of medicinal drugs.
6. **Anticipated** /æn'tɪsɪpeɪtɪd/ (adjective): Expected or predicted; to look forward to.



## Comprehension Questions

### Multiple Choice

1. Which medications mentioned in the text are used to treat diabetes obesity and heart disease?  
Option: Ozempic and Rybelsus  
Option: Wegovy  
Option: Semaglutide  
Option: All of the above
2. What was the percentage increase in prescriptions for semaglutide between January 2021 and December 2023?  
Option: 250%  
Option: 321%  
Option: 442%  
Option: 512%
3. How much can the costs of these medications exceed annually?  
Option: \$5,000  
Option: \$7,000  
Option: \$10,000  
Option: \$15,000
4. Which patient populations face challenges in accessing these medications?  
Option: Medicaid and Medicare beneficiaries  
Option: Private insurance holders only  
Option: Uninsured individuals  
Option: Veterans
5. Which foundation conducted an analysis on federal spending on weight-loss drugs?  
Option: World Health Organization (WHO)  
Option: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)  
Option: Kaiser Family Foundation (KFF)  
Option: Red Cross
6. What is the potential annual cost to Medicare if one in ten eligible adults use Wegovy for heart attack and stroke prevention?



- Option: \$1 billion
- Option: \$2 billion
- Option: \$3 billion
- Option: \$4 billion

## Answer

**Multiple Choice:** 1. All of the above 2. 442% 3. \$10,000 4. Medicaid and Medicare beneficiaries 5. Kaiser Family Foundation (KFF) 6. \$3 billion

## Vocabulary quizzes

**Multiple Choice ( Select the Correct answer for each question. )**

1. What term describes significant changes or modifications?

- Option: A) Alterations
- Option: B) Phenomenon
- Option: C) Biomarkers
- Option: D) Toxicity

2. Which word means examined or inspected closely?

- Option: A) Surge
- Option: B) Endorsement
- Option: C) Scrutinized
- Option: D) Antioxidant

3. What term means to maintain or prolong something?

- Option: A) Judiciously
- Option: B) Perpetuate
- Option: C) Complications
- Option: D) Adverse

4. Which word relates to drugs or medications?

- Option: A) Nutrients
- Option: B) Medicaid
- Option: C) Disparities
- Option: D) Pharmaceutical

5. What term refers to a long duration or lifespan?

- Option: A) Expenditures



- Option: B) Longevity
- Option: C) Antioxidant
- Option: D) Eligibility

6. Which term describes introducing new ideas or methods?

- Option: A) Tolerability
- Option: B) Innovative
- Option: C) Beneficiaries
- Option: D) Fractures

7. Which term describes the period after menopause in women?

- Option: A) Osteoporosis
- Option: B) Postmenopausal
- Option: C) Anticipated
- Option: D) Toxicity

8. What term refers to the state of meeting the criteria or qualifications?

- Option: A) Surged
- Option: B) Eligibility
- Option: C) Nutrients
- Option: D) Complications

9. Which word describes differences or inequalities?

- Option: A) Judiciously
- Option: B) Disparities
- Option: C) Biochemical
- Option: D) Alterations

10. What term describes breaks or cracks in bones?

- Option: A) Correlation
- Option: B) Fractures
- Option: C) Biomarkers
- Option: D) Surge

**Gap-Fill ( Fill in the blanks with the correct word from the vocabulary list. )**

11. \_\_\_\_\_ can be observed in the genetic code due to environmental factors.
12. There was a sudden \_\_\_\_\_ in demand for the new product.
13. The patient's condition worsened due to unexpected medical \_\_\_\_\_.



14. The results of the experiment were as \_\_\_\_\_ by the researchers.
15. To apply for the scholarship students must meet the \_\_\_\_\_ criteria.
16. The chemical showed high levels of \_\_\_\_\_ in the lab tests.
17. The study focused on the \_\_\_\_\_ processes within cells.
18. Fruits and vegetables provide essential vitamins and \_\_\_\_\_ for the body.
19. Low-income families may be eligible for assistance through the state \_\_\_\_\_ program.
20. The presence of specific \_\_\_\_\_ can indicate the progression of a disease.

**Matching Sentences ( Match each definition to the correct word from the vocabulary list. )**

21. The eclipse was a rare natural event that fascinated astronomers around the world.
22. Her job requires a range of skills as it involves various aspects like marketing finance and operations.
23. The celebrity's strong support for the new fashion line led to increased sales.
24. He weighed the options carefully and made the decision .
25. The study found a strong between exercise and improved heart health.
26. The medication had effects on some patients causing discomfort.
27. Berries are known for their high levels of properties that help combat free radicals.
28. The company reviewed its financial records to analyze its budget and .
29. The charity event aims to raise funds for underprivileged children who are the of the donations.
30. The doctor considered the patient's reaction to the medication to determine its .

## Answer

**Multiple Choice:** 1. A) Alterations 2. C) Scrutinized 3. B) Perpetuate 4. D) Pharmaceutical 5. B) Longevity  
6. B) Innovative 7. B) Postmenopausal 8. B) Eligibility 9. B) Disparities 10. B) Fractures

**Gap-Fill:** 11. Alterations 12. Surge 13. Complications 14. Anticipated 15. Eligibility 16. Toxicity 17.  
Biochemical



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18. Nutrients 19. Medicaid 20. Biomarkers

**Matching sentence:** 1. Phenomenon 2. Multi-faceted 3. Endorsement 4. Judiciously 5. Correlation 6. Adverse  
7. Antioxidant 8. Expenditures 9. Beneficiaries 10. Tolerability

## **CATEGORY**

1. Health - LEVEL6

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