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## BACKGROUND

Food allergies affect approximately 8% of the US population, and management typically involves dietary restrictions, emergency preparedness, and treating accidental exposures. While avoiding allergens is crucial, newer treatments, such as omalizumab and peanut allergen oral immunotherapy, can reduce the response to one or more allergens following accidental exposure. However, the costs and complex dosing regimens for treatments can pose significant challenges for both patients and payers.

## OBJECTIVE

To gain insights from a multi-phase program focused on identifying health plan best practices for managing immunoglobulin E (IgE)-mediated food allergies. The program explored the evolving landscape of food allergy management, particularly in relation to newly approved biologic treatments.

## METHODS

A 3-phase program approach included: (1) a national survey of managed care professionals, (2) in-depth interviews with managed care experts, and (3) a virtual roundtable discussion of findings with a clinical expert and managed care experts. Survey respondents were required to declare knowledge of and influence over formulary and/or other clinical management decisions for medications in their organization to participate. The managed care experts were chosen for their professional roles and diverse expertise in food allergy management.



## CONCLUSIONS

These AMCP Market Insights program findings provide insights into the opportunities for managed care to support the development of clear, evidence-based coverage policies, which can help ensure timely and appropriate treatment of IgE-mediated food allergies.

## RESULTS

From the 6 interviewed managed care professionals and 61 responses to the national survey, 8 health plan best practices were identified. Insights from phase 1 and 2 outlined a need for increased education on the mechanisms of IgE-mediated food allergies to guide clinical and policy decisions. Additionally, in the phase 3 roundtable, clinical and managed care professionals provided implementation details around the best practices including the development of evidence-based coverage policies for biologic therapies and ensuring emergency medications like epinephrine are accessible and affordable. There was also an emphasis on flexibility in policy implementation to reduce treatment barriers for patients while maintaining a focus on safety, efficacy, and cost-effectiveness.

### Eight Potential Health Plan Best Practices that Could Support Health Plans and Care Delivery Systems in Managing Food Allergies

- 1. Increase Awareness of Food Allergy Mechanisms**  
Having a strong scientific foundation is essential for the shift from managing food allergies with emergency interventions to focusing on prevention.
- 2. Prioritize Patients**  
Develop coverage policies that prioritize reducing the risk of fatal food reactions, reducing the severity of accidental exposures, and minimizing patient fear and anxiety associated with living with food allergies.
- 3. Establish Appropriate Coverage Criteria for Treatments**  
Use well-defined diagnostic criteria, such as IgE antibody testing, diagnosis by an allergy specialist, and documented history of food allergy/allergic reactions. Simplify the reauthorization process to reduce barriers to care.
- 4. Assess Cost-Effectiveness**  
Evaluating the cost-effectiveness of new and existing treatments in the context of the total cost of care, including hospital admission rates, emergency room visits, and use of rescue medications, is important to ensure the best use of resources.
- 5. Ensure Access to Emergency Medications**  
It is essential to ensure emergency medications like epinephrine are affordable and accessible to all patients to manage severe allergic reactions promptly.
- 6. Standardize Diagnosis and Monitoring**  
Implement a standardized risk assessment for patients with food allergy diagnoses and ensure equitable care. Monitor response to treatment to ensure treatment effectiveness, patient safety, and optimal long-term outcomes.
- 7. Addressing Social Determinants of Health**  
Integrate socioeconomic considerations into health plan strategies to improve access to care and health outcomes for vulnerable populations. Address social determinants of health by creating wraparound support systems, improving network adequacy, and minimizing out-of-pocket costs.
- 8. Incorporating Behavioral Health Considerations**  
Support referrals to behavioral health services by integrating the referrals into benefit designs such that a food allergy diagnosis would be a qualifier for referral to behavioral health services.

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