

A Bold Partnership to Lower Drug Costs in Kansas

How a not-for-profit relationship is restructuring specialty drug pricing – and delivering measurable savings for Kansas employers.

When it comes to prescription drug prices, Kansas employers and families feel the pressure.

Across the country, rising drug costs, supply chain markups and rebate-driven pricing models continue to strain businesses and households alike – despite policy debates, manufacturer discounts and other well-intended reforms that haven't fully addressed the root problem.

That's why Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas (BCBSKS) took a different approach – working with CivicaScript®, a not-for-profit pharmaceutical company backed by health plans, to lower drug costs and deliver meaningful savings to members.

It's not a pilot program. It's not a rebate strategy. It's a structural change to deliver low-cost generic medicines to patients.

And it's already working.

A market that needed fixing

"Some low-cost generic medicines are marked up several hundred percent by the time they reach the patient," says Brent Eberle, President of CivicaScript. "In today's drug supply chain, many participants may benefit when prices are higher – including manufacturers, wholesalers, pharmacies and traditional pharmacy benefit managers," he adds.

CivicaScript was created to bring affordable versions of commonly prescribed but high-priced generic medicines to the market. Its business model brings an unprecedented level of pricing transparency to the drug supply chain – which is particularly impactful for specialty generics and biosimilars, where pricing can be opaque and unpredictable. Through a drug selection advisory committee of pharmacy leaders from

participating health plans, the organization identifies generic and biosimilar medications to bring to market at low cost that it believes will have the greatest impact. Its model is straightforward:

- **Identify** high-cost specialty drugs that drive employer and patient spend.
- **Partner** directly with vetted manufacturers to produce quality, lower-cost generic and biosimilar alternatives.
- **Price transparently**, covering production costs while avoiding the excessive markups that are common in traditional supply chains.

"We're proving that our combination of transparency and sustainable low pricing has potential to transform the system – reducing drug costs and improving patient access to the medicines they need to stay healthy," says Eberle.

That mission alignment mattered to BCBSKS.

"As a not-for-profit Blue plan, we're always looking for solutions that truly lower the total cost of care," says Tiffany Liesmann, AVP Chief Pharmacist at BCBSKS. "This initiative puts people first. It's about bringing meaningful affordability to our employer groups and members."



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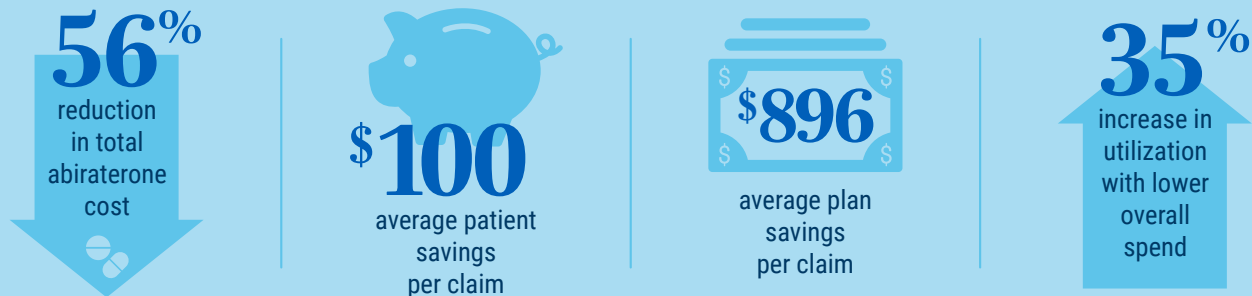
– Tiffany Liesmann, PharmD

Disrupting the market, driving down costs

CivicaScript's first product was abiraterone, a treatment for certain types of prostate cancer. When CivicaScript entered the market, the medication cost more than \$3,000 per month in some settings.

CivicaScript brought it to market at a recommended price of \$171 for a month's supply. CivicaScript not only offered a lower-cost alternative, its transparent, not-for-profit model also created competitive pressure, and the average price of abiraterone from other manufacturers fell by 19%.

The impact in 2024



Source: Annual Savings Report Benchmark, BCBSKS December 2025

“We expected savings because we were moving members to a lower-cost, FDA-approved generic alternative,” Liesmann says. “But it’s still exciting to see it play out. We really did help bring a lower-cost product to market and put it in the hands of our members.”

For employers, that translates to lower claims costs – helping stabilize premiums and reduce overall health care spend. For members, it can mean lower out-of-pocket costs and more predictable expenses for medications they may take long term.

“This is truly a unique model,” says Liesmann. “Our competitors aren’t structured to do this. As a not-for-profit plan, we have the flexibility to pursue solutions that disrupt the supply chain in ways others simply can’t.”

Transparency and quality are non-negotiables

Unlike many traditional drug supply chain models, CivicaScript emphasizes transparency. Each product’s package includes a QR code that patients and pharmacies can scan to see the maximum retail price a patient should be charged.

Affordability never comes at the expense of quality. CivicaScript conducts its own quality audits. “It’s not just about inexpensive medications,” says Eberle. “We deliver quality medications at an affordable price.”

Expanding the impact

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas expanded its offering of CivicaScript products in 2025, including specialty generics used in neurology and oncology care. The health plan will add four more CivicaScript products in 2026 and expects to generate an additional \$100,000 in annual savings from the next phase of products.

Nationally, CivicaScript has prioritized additional medications for future development, with multiple launches planned over the next several years.

“This is still new,” Eberle says. “But we have a strong pipeline, and we’re working hand in hand with our health plan members to identify the products that will have the greatest benefit to patients.”

The mission in action

For BCBSKS, the CivicaScript relationship reflects something larger than a drug strategy.

“This isn’t a profit center for us,” Liesmann says. “It’s about affordability. It’s about lowering the cost of care for Kansas businesses and families.”

In a market where rising specialty drug costs are one of the biggest drivers of premium growth, that commitment matters.

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