Contemporary Insights Into Patient and Provider Perceptions of and Barriers to Biosimilar Use From the Biosim.care Web App

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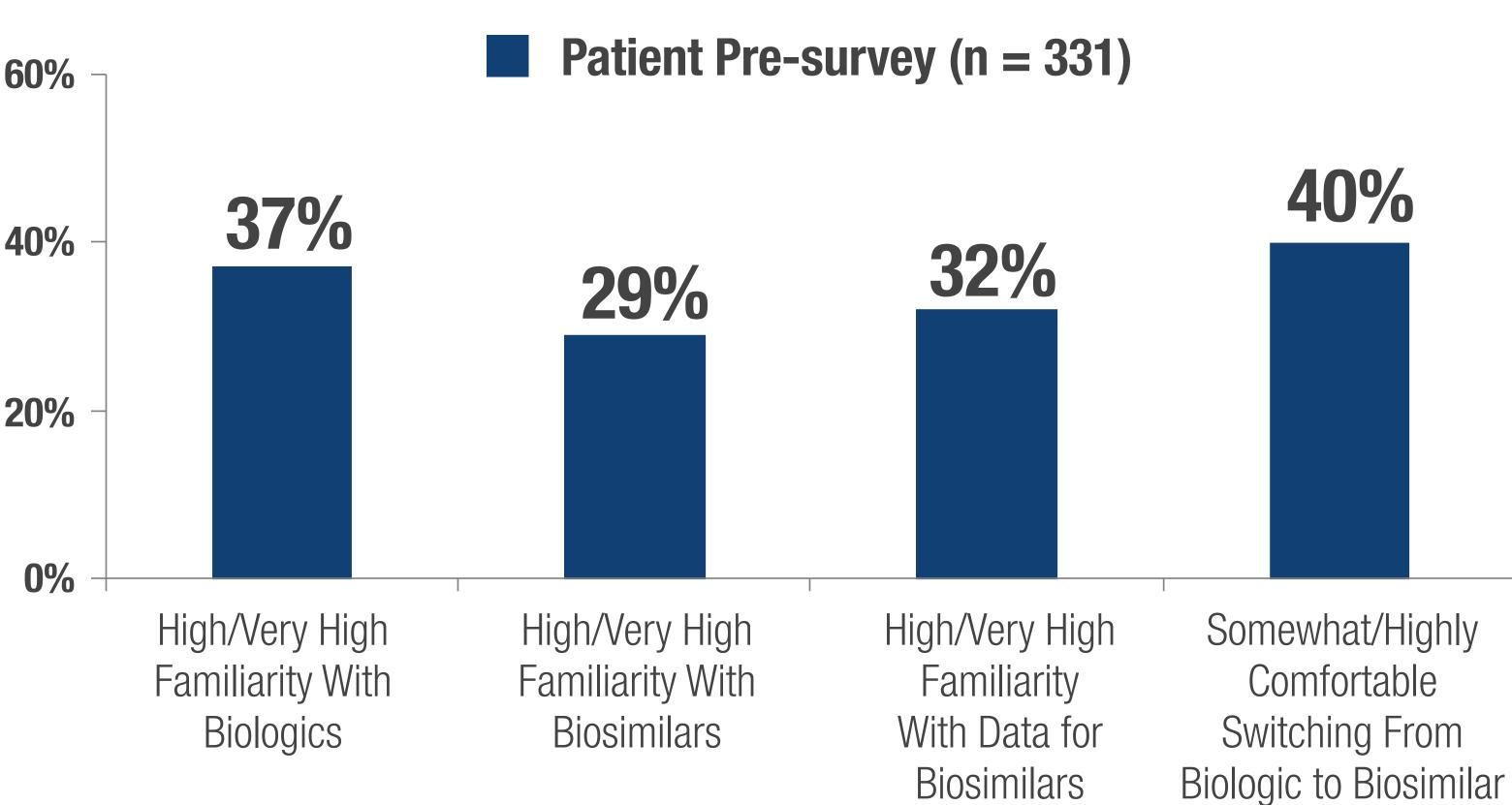
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BACKGROUND

- As the number of FDA-approved biosimilars is rapidly expanding, there is a critical need to identify and address patient and provider barriers to their evidence-based utilization.

- This study sought to gain insights from educational patient and provider web apps (available at **https://biosim.care**) that present users with aligned content designed to close gaps in biosimilar knowledge and use.

METHODS

- In partnership with the AMCP Foundation and the Biosimilars Council, PRIME Education developed patient and provider web apps presenting aligned education regarding biosimilars.

- The web apps were reviewed by leading experts, patient advocates, and representatives from the AMCP Foundation and the Biosimilars Council to ensure relevance across stakeholders.

- Pre- and post-education survey items were embedded to evaluate the effectiveness of the web app and to assess patient and provider perceptions of biosimilars and their use. An interim analysis of survey results are reported here.

- P values were calculated using the chi-square tests.

BIOSIM.CARE

Innovative Features of Web Apps

- Tethered patient and provider learning pathways
- Specialty-specific tracks for oncology, rheumatology, and gastroenterology
- Interactive learning environment
  - Evidence summaries
  - Whiteboard animations
  - Mock patient/provider counseling videos
  - Downloadable tools

RESULTS

Table 1. Web App User Metrics (July 2023 – March 2024)

	Patient	Provider
Total Web App Access	634	3,458

Table 2. Characteristics of Patients Who Completed Surveys

Patients (n = 331)	
Topics of Interest	
Rheumatology Biosimilars	47%
Gastroenterology Biosimilars	32%
Oncology Biosimilars	21%
Patients That Were Ever Prescribed Biologic	
Yes	18%
No	66%
Not sure	16%
Proportion of Patients Prescribed Biologic That Were Taking Biosimilar	
Yes	15%
No	69%
Not sure	16%

Table 3. Characteristics of Providers Who Completed Surveys

Providers (n = 1,343)	
Topics of Interest	
Rheumatology	42%
Gastroenterology	32%
Oncology	26%
Percentage of Patients Taking Biologics That Are Prescribed a Biosimilar	
0%–20%	27%
21%–40%	19%
41%–60%	20%
61%–80%	12%
81%–100%	4%
This does not apply to my role	18%

Figure 1. Patient-Reported Awareness and Perceptions of Biosimilars

Patient Pre-survey (n = 331)

- High/Very High Familiarity With Biologics: 37%
- High/Very High Familiarity With Biosimilars: 29%
- High/Very High Familiarity With Data for Biosimilars: 32%
- Somewhat/Highly Comfortable Switching From Biologic to Biosimilar: 40%

Figure 2. Provider-Reported Barriers to the Utilization of Biosimilars

- **29%** Patient resistance to switching
- **14%** Provider resistance to switching
- **25%** Difficulty obtaining insurance coverage for biosimilars
- **12%** Lack of training in switching process
- **17%** Difficulty keeping track of which biosimilars are approved

Figure 3. Provider Perceptions of Patient Counseling and Insurance Navigation

Providers Reporting They Often or Always Counsel Patients Who Take Biologic Medications on the Safety and Efficacy of Switching to a Biosimilar

Pre-survey (n = 1,343): 44%
Post-survey (n = 802): 59%
$P < 0.001$

Providers Rating Their Confidence in Navigating the Insurance Approval Process for Biosimilars as High or Very High

Pre-survey (n = 1,343): 24%
Post-survey (n = 802): 40%
$P < 0.001$

Figure 4. Patient-Reported Experiences With Understanding and Navigating Insurance Coverage for Biologics and Biosimilars

- **Only 7%** Reported that they understood insurance coverage "pretty well" or "very well"

- **Only 22%** Reported that their care team provides "a good amount" or "a lot" of support in navigating insurance

- **Only 21%** Reported that their insurance plan's customer service "usually/always" provides information needed

Figure 5. Providers' Action Plans for Supporting Patients Who Are Switching to Biosimilars (n = 802)

- **24%** Become more familiar with biosimilars that are approved
- **23%** Become more familiar with the existing data for biosimilars
- **19%** Discuss treatment options with all eligible patients

CONCLUSIONS/CLINICAL IMPLICATIONS

Key findings from the surveys:

- Very low proportions of patients prescribed biologics are taking biosimilars.

- The majority of patients lack knowledge about biosimilars and are uncomfortable switching from a biologic to a biosimilar. Low proportions of providers frequently counsel their patients about the efficacy and safety of switching to a biosimilar.

- Lack of understanding of insurance for biosimilars and inadequate support for patients in navigating insurance represent significant barriers to the adoption of biosimilars.

- Following engagement with the web app, many providers planned to become more familiar with biosimilars with the intent to counsel patients about them, and displayed improved confidence in navigating the insurance approval process for biosimilars.

Web apps present a digital solution for patient and provider education, with the potential to facilitate shared decision-making, and may be useful in improving biosimilar knowledge and utilization.

Managed care organizations can play a key role in providing evidence-based access to biosimilars.

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