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PRESCRIPTION DRUG RETAIL SALES IN THE MOUNTAIN WEST

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PURPOSE:

This fact sheet synthesizes data on prescription drug retail sales in the Mountain West (Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, and Utah). “Retail Sales for Prescription Drugs Filled at Pharmacies by Payer,” a 2019 report by the Kaiser Family Foundation, includes data on the amount of retail sales for prescription drugs made in each state by dollar amount, along with the method of coverage, including commercial, Medicare, Medicaid and cash payment.¹

ABOUT THE DATA:

The original report accounts for 93% of retail prescription drugs sold at the state level and is projected to represent 100% of retail sales for prescription drugs.² Based on the National Prescription Audit (NPA) database, sales data include money spent by both plans and patients, but do not include any patient rebates. All retail sales include those made at chain pharmacies, food stores, mass merchandisers, and independent pharmacies. Any prescription drugs within a closed healthcare system that are dispensed through pharmacies, clinics, hospitals, or physician’s offices are not included in the data set. The “commercial” category refers to any prescriptions covered by both commercial payers and government programs, not including Medicare or Medicaid.

KEY FINDINGS:

1. Colorado (20%) ranks 6th nationally for percent of retail sales for prescription drugs paid by Medicaid.
2. Utah has the highest amount of retail sales for prescription drugs paid commercially (67%) in the United States, along with the lowest percentage nationally of sales paid by Medicare (24%).

Table 1 shows the percentage payment methods for prescription drug retail sales at pharmacies in the Mountain West states and the United States in 2019. Utah has significantly more retail sales paid commercially (67%) in comparison to other Mountain West states and the national average, and ranks first for this payment method nationally.

Table 1: Percent of Retail Sales for Prescription Drugs Filled at Pharmacies, by payer

Mountain West State	Commercial	Medicare	Medicaid	Cash
<i>United States Average</i>	<i>49%</i>	<i>36%</i>	<i>13%</i>	<i>2%</i>
Arizona	47%	37%	14%	2%
Colorado	48%	30%	20%	2%
Nevada	51%	32%	15%	2%
New Mexico	52%	37%	9%	2%
Utah	67%	24%	7%	2%

¹ Adapted from “Retail Sales for Prescription Drugs Filled at Pharmacies by Payer” March 2022. Kaiser Family Foundation and U.S. Bureau, 2020 Population and Housing Unit Estimate Survey.

¹ Kaiser Family Foundation. (2020, March 5) *Retail Sales for Prescription Drugs Filled at Pharmacies by Payer*. Kaiser Family Foundation. Retrieved November 13, 2022, from www.kff.org/health-costs/state-indicator/total-sales-for-retail-rx-drugs/?dataView=1¤tTimeframe=0&sortModel=%7B%22colId%22:%22Location%22,%22sort%22:%22asc%22%7D

² Ibid.