Special Reports & Webinars

Special Report: The Contracting Environment in 2026

The commercial contracting environment continues to evolve as new pricing models, policy reforms, and medical benefit management reshape payer discussions across therapeutic areas. HIRC's report, *The Contracting Environment in 2026*, assists pharmaceutical manufacturers in understanding trends in contracting with commercial payers across 40 traditional, specialty, and oncology therapeutic categories. The report addresses the following questions:

- Which recent market trends have the potential to influence the contracting environment over the next 1-3 years?
- What is the status of contracts in-place or offered to commercial health plans in the last 12-18 months across 40 traditional, specialty, and oncologic therapeutic areas?
- What contract approaches are most common overall and by therapeutic area (e.g., flat access rebates, price protection, market share rebates)?
- What are the most common average discount/rebate amounts offered across 40 traditional, specialty, and oncologic therapeutic areas?
- What is the status of alternative or novel contracting approaches, such as risk/outcomes-based, portfolio, and indication-based contracts?

Key Finding: Commercial contracting in 2026 reflects an increasingly complex market environment, yet competition, rebate economics, and net cost remain the primary drivers of contracting decisions. The landscape continues to vary considerably by therapeutic area.

External Market Forces Influencing Contracting Discussions

The contracting environment is increasingly shaped by external market forces that extend beyond competition alone. PBM reform, the Inflation Reduction Act, new pricing models, and increased focus on medical management are among the top trends that have the potential to influence the future contracting environment. Payers are considering these emerging market trends in contracting discussions, although their impact today is generally viewed as incremental rather than transformative.

Recent Market Trends with Potential to Disrupt the Commercial Contracting Environment

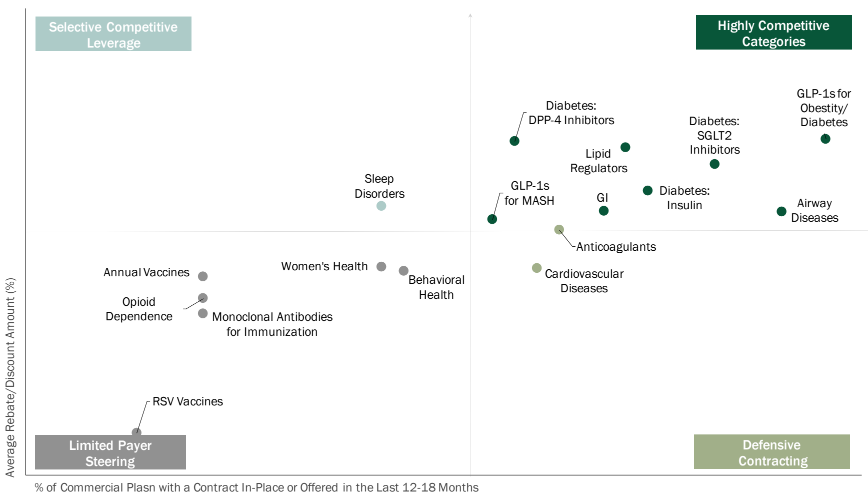
PBM Reform	Regulatory/ Policy	Emerging Pricing Models	Medical Drug Management
FTC Investigations of the top three PBMs have resulted in settlements that alter PBM business models.	The Inflation Reduction Act brings Maximum Fair Prices (MFPs) for a growing list of products that payers may use as benchmark pricing.	Most Favored Nations pricing and direct-to-patient models introduce visible pricing benchmarks across several therapeutic areas.	Growing payer focus on medical benefit management and formularies is increasing pressure for medical rebating.

The full report provides the results of in-depth qualitative interviews with commercial payers to better understand perspectives and insights into these trends and their impact.

The Contracting Environment for Traditional Medications

The contracting environment varies by individual therapeutic market as channel, clinical, and reimbursement dynamics create distinct contracting landscapes across traditional, specialty, and oncology categories. Across **traditional therapies**, payer contracting leverage rises where competition enables formulary steering and falls where clinical or structural factors limit it.

Commercial Contracting Environment for Traditional Therapeutic Areas, 2026



While vaccines and women's health are competitive, they show limited payer contracting, likely because utilization is largely provider-driven or constrained by public health coverage requirements. Contracting is most common in diabetes, obesity, & airway diseases.

40 Therapeutic Areas are Examined

The complete report reviews contracting prevalence, approaches/types, and most common average rebate discount amounts across the following therapeutic areas/classes:

Traditional Therapies	Specialty Medications	Cancer/Oncology
Diabetes: DPP-4 Inhibitors	Inflammation & Immunology (I&I): IV TNF Inhibitors	Bispecific Antibodies
Diabetes: Insulin	I&I: Self-Administered TNF Inhibitors	CAR-T Cell Therapies
Diabetes: SGLT2 Inhibitors	I&I: Interleukin Inhibitors	Immune Checkpoint Inhibitors
Obesity/Diabetes: GLP-1 Antagonists	I&I: JAK Inhibitors	IV Targeted Cancer Therapy - 19 Unique Cancer Types
Vaccines: Annual Vaccines (e.g., COVID, Flu, Pneumo.)	Cancer Support: Erythropoiesis-stimulating Agents	Oncology Biosimilars
Vaccines: Monoclonal Antibodies for Immunization	Cancer Support: White Blood Cell Stimulants	Oncology Brand Originators
Vaccines: RSV Vaccines	Cholesterol-lowering Biologics	Oral Targeted Therapies - 19 Unique Cancer Types
Airway Diseases (e.g., Asthma, COPD)	Genetic & Rare Diseases	NEW: Radioligand Therapies
Anticoagulants	HIV/AIDS	
Behavioral Health	MASH	
Cardiovascular Diseases (e.g., CAD, CHF)	Migraine	
NEW: MASH - GLP-1 Agonists	Multiple Sclerosis	
Gastrointestinal Diseases	Ocular Disorders (Ophthalmic Injections)	
Lipid Regulators	Parkinson's Disease	
Opioid Dependence	Respiratory Biologics	
NEW: Sleep Disorders (e.g., Insomnia, OSA)		
Women's Health		

Research Methodology and Report Availability

Special reports draw upon study data across HIRC services, allowing readers to glean insights into high level topics across varying market segments, channels, and/or therapeutic areas. HIRC's report, *The Contracting Environment in 2026,* includes survey and qualitative follow-up interview insights from commercial health plans, collected in 2026. The report is available now to HIRC's Special Report subscribers at www.hirc.com.

HIRC's Special Reports and Webinars provide two additional ways to stay informed on emerging market developments in real-time. The series consists of releases throughout the year either in live/archived webinar or special report format and covers the latest trends and special interest topics. Access is based on your company's current subscription. These resources are also available for purchase. To subscribe, contact:

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