

Biologic, Biosimilar and Specialty Drug Utilization Trends Among US Employers

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Background

- Biosimilars may control costs and increase access to biologic specialty-drugs.
- Marketed US biosimilars are available for the following innovator (reference) products:
 - infliximab, filgrastim, pegfilgrastim, bevacizumab, trastuzumab, rituximab, epoetin alfa.

Objective

- Use objective data to examine the growth of specialty-drugs, biosimilar use, and coverage benefits.

Methods

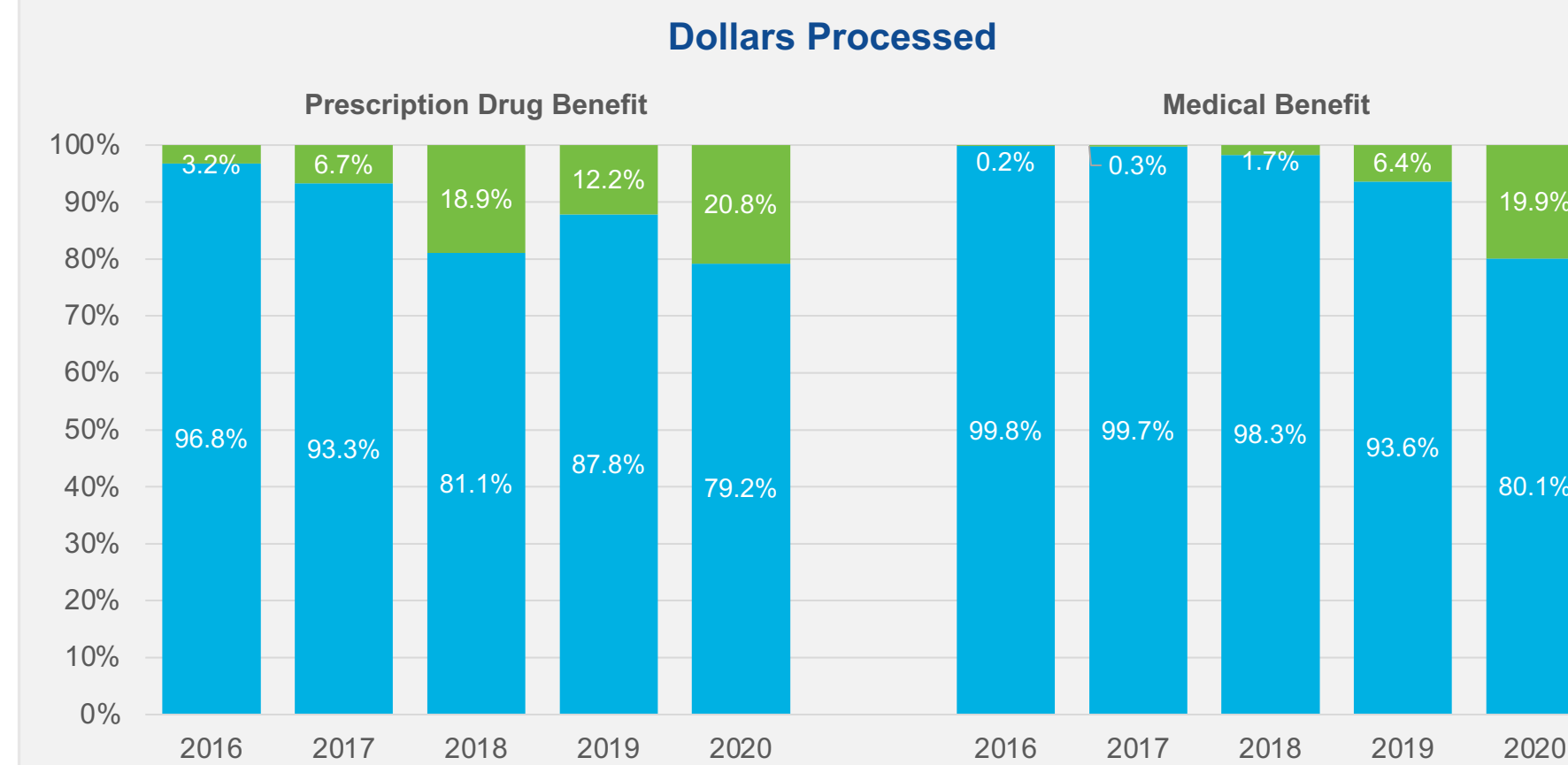
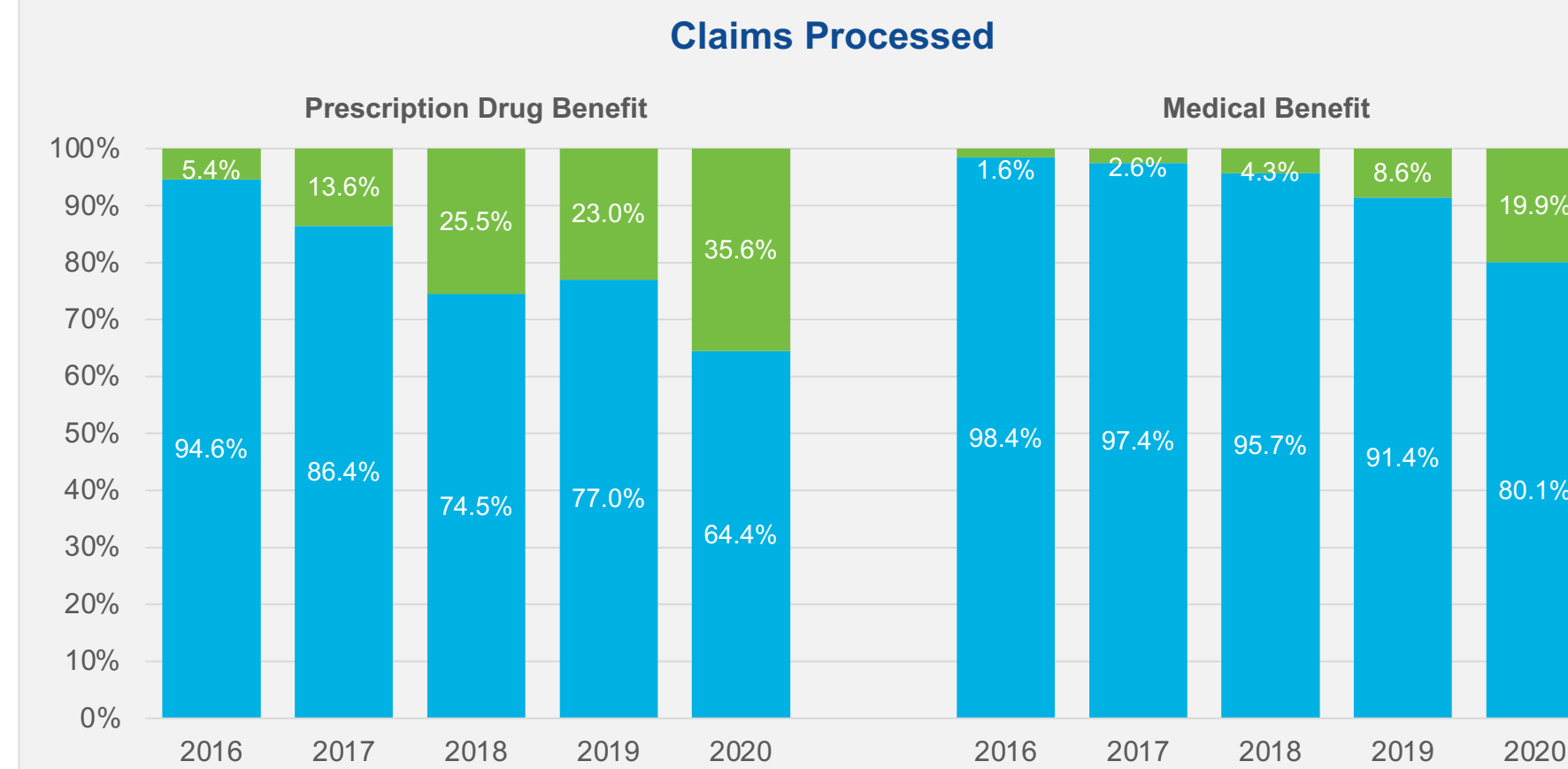
- US beneficiaries within the Workpartners (formerly known as HCMS) Research Reference Database (RRDb) from 2016—2020.
- Workpartners RRDb contains:
 - Medical and pharmaceutical claims for over 3 million employees and dependents (about 4.6 million total lives) from multiple US private sector employers in the medical, retail, service, manufacturing, transportation, energy, technology, financial, and utility industries.
 - Enhanced employee demographics (including self-reported race).
 - Job-related employee information (salary, job type, full/part-time status, exempt/non-exempt status).
 - Employees in all states.
 - Claims with absence durations and payments for employee populations eligible for STD=1.2 million, LTD=1.1 million, WC=1.4 million, SL=710,000.
- The Workpartners RRDb has been used for research on:
 - The impact of conditions and therapies on patients,¹ employees,²⁻⁷ and caregivers.^{8,9}
 - Specialty pharmacy-managed conditions such as hepatitis-C,^{2,3} multiple sclerosis,^{4,5} acromegaly,^{1,6} and rheumatoid arthritis.⁹
 - The impact of COVID-19 on claims utilization and absence.
 - Optimal Benefit Design.
 - Risk-adjusted benchmarks (Workpartners' HUI - Health Utilization Index).
 - Predictive modeling for mental health and avoidable emergency department claims.
- Annual claims and dollars for specialty agents were classified as:
 - Innovator (reference) agents or biosimilars.
 - Benefit used (prescription or medical).
 - Claims and costs in 2020 were compared with baseline (2016).

Results

- Over the five-year period, utilization of specialty products cost \$301.5 million for 73,611 claims in aggregate (innovator and biosimilar).
- Compared with 2016, 2020 claims increased by 17% and dollars increased by 30%.

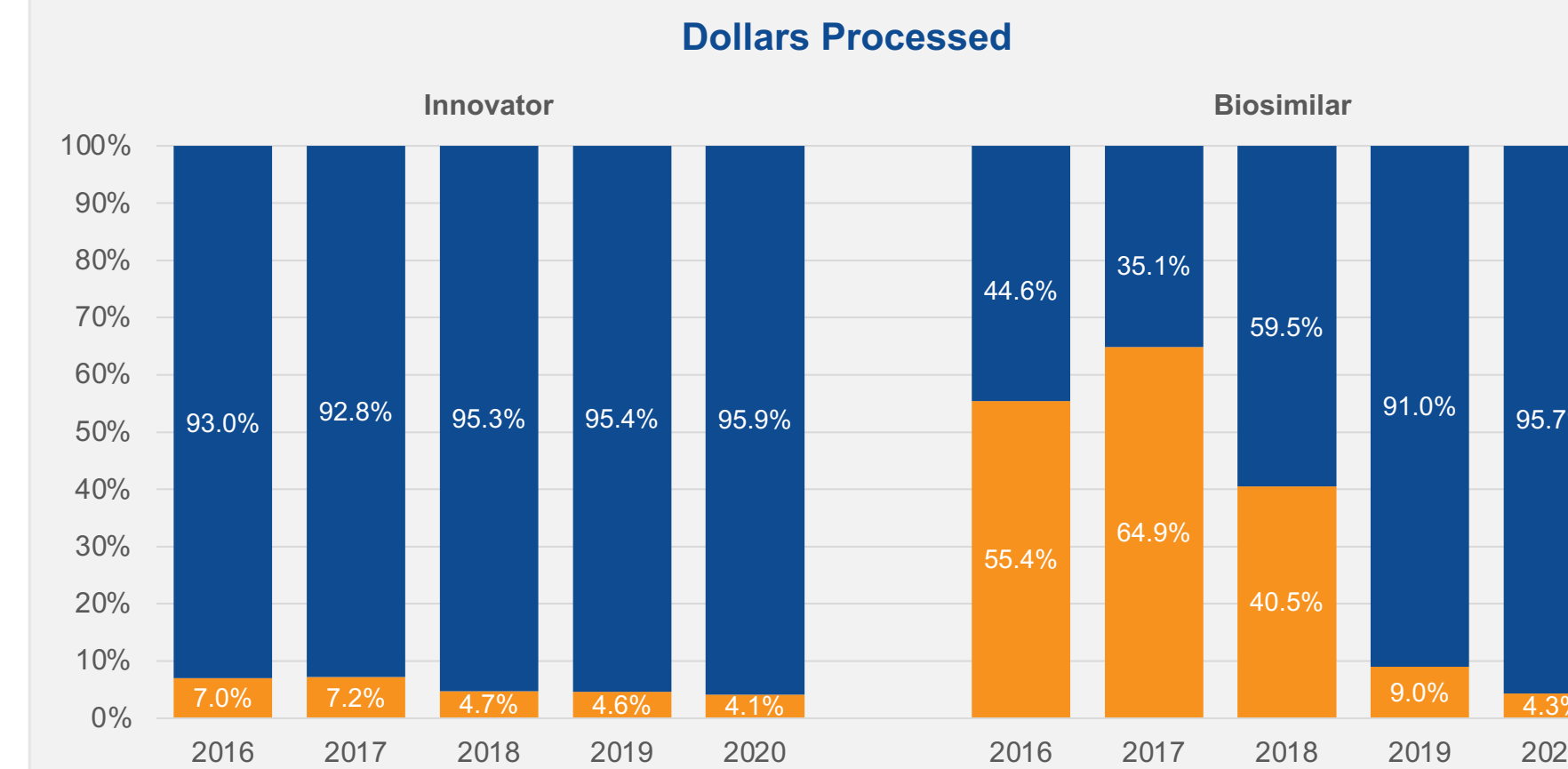
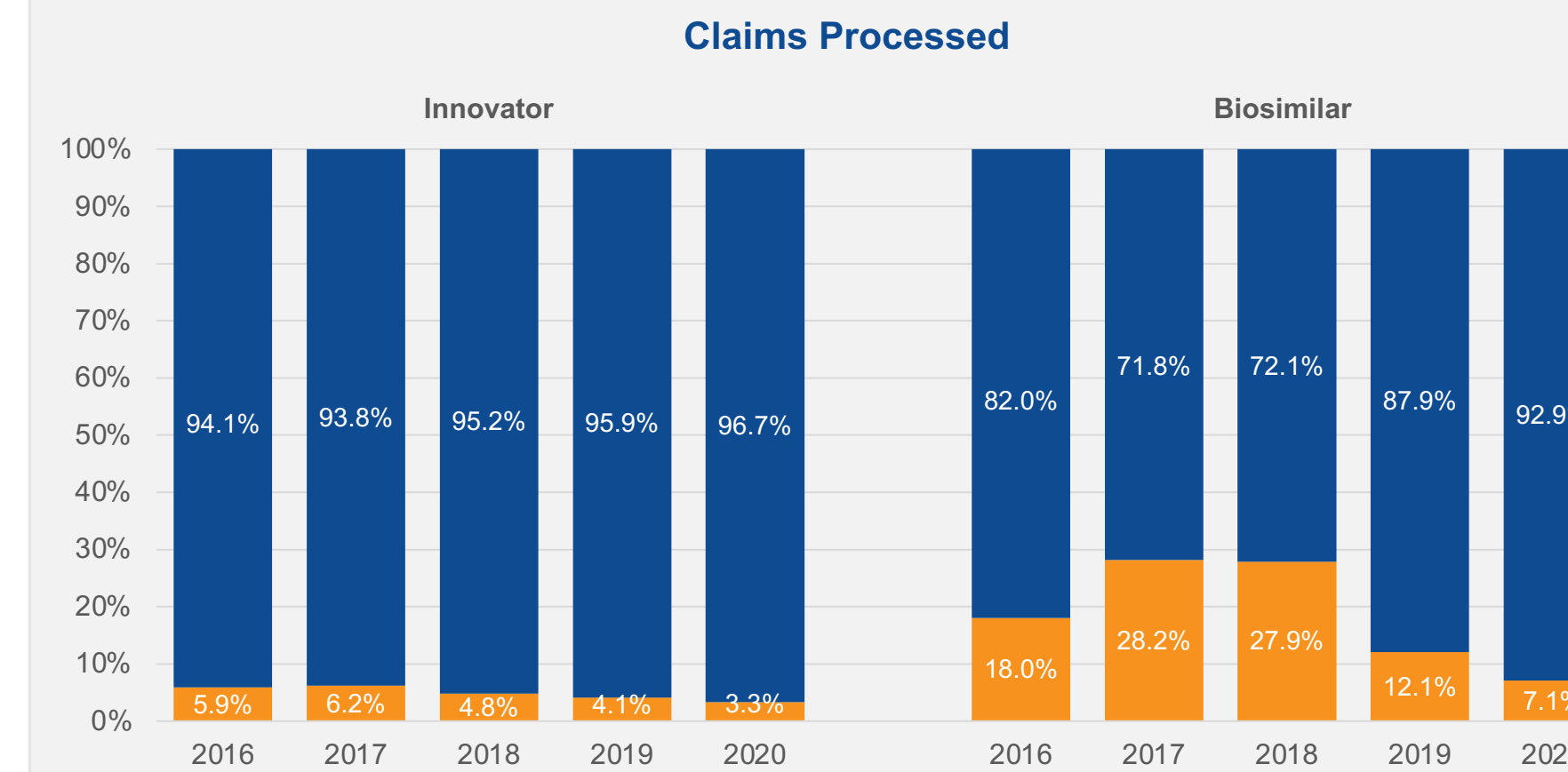
Legend: ■ Innovator ■ Prescription Drug Benefit ■ Biosimilar ■ Medical Benefit

Claims and dollars processed each year under the medical and prescription benefit.



- In total comparison of 2020 with 2016, innovator product use remained relatively constant (decreasing ~5% in claims and increasing ~4% of dollars), while biosimilars' claims increased by 1,198% of claims and 6,120% of costs.

Claims and dollars processed each year for innovator and biosimilar products.



Conclusions

- Health plans have recognized the value/savings and increased the use of biosimilars.
- The shift from the pharmacy to the medical benefit may be due to many of these biosimilars being infused.
- Future analysis should focus on individual biologics (innovator/biosimilar pairs) and explore whether the findings vary by therapeutic area, agent, insurance plan, and/or region of the country.

References

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