

Report for Fall Survey of Independent Pharmacy Owners/Managers

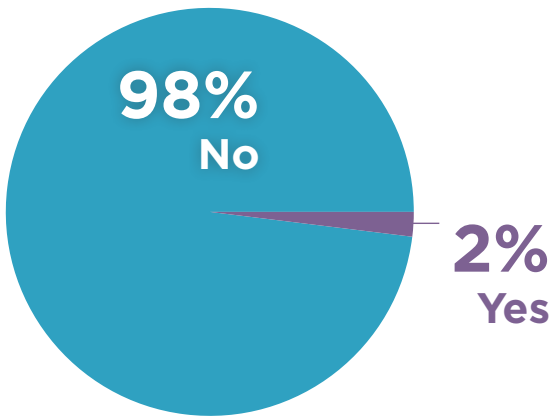
Executive summary:

The National Community Pharmacists Association surveyed roughly 4,135 independent pharmacy owners and managers between Sept. 24-Oct. 11, 2024. The survey produced 467 responses. Questions involved the Medicare Drug Price Negotiation program, whether contracts are finalized for participation in CY25 Medicare Part D pharmacy networks, pharmacy benefit manager contract “negotiations,” how they covered 2023 pharmacy direct and indirect remuneration fees assessed earlier in 2024, GLP-1 agonists, and issues around ADHD drug supplies and staffing.

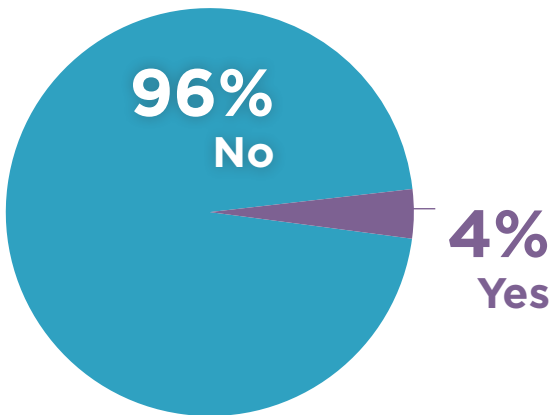
Key findings:

- CMS recently released the negotiated prices of the first 10 drugs in the Medicare Drug Price Negotiation Program, which begins Jan. 1, 2026. Under this program, pharmacies will likely be waiting over 30 days for the manufacturer refund payments, and the average pharmacy will have to float over \$27,000 every month waiting to be made whole from manufacturer refund payments. 51 percent of respondents say they are strongly considering not stocking these drugs, and additional 40 percent are somewhat considering not stocking them.
- 73 percent say they have not yet finalized their Medicare Part D contracts for 2025, and they don’t know which plans they’ll be in. This is troubling considering open enrollment begins Oct. 15.
- In July 23 testimony on Capitol Hill, executives from Express Scripts, CVS Caremark, and OptumRx made several questionable claims about their interactions with patients and unaffiliated pharmacies. Express Scripts’ president, for example, said that “pharmacies can always redline a contract back to us and negotiate.”
 - 98 percent of respondents said they hadn’t been successful at redlining and negotiating contracts with Express Scripts prior to July 23.
 - 96 percent said they hadn’t been successful at redlining and negotiating contracts with Express Scripts since July 23.
- Regarding GLP-1 agonists (a class of medications utilized in the treatment of type 2 diabetes and obesity):
 - 26 percent of respondents say they will stock and sell these products. An additional 59 percent say they are considering stopping altogether, and 14 percent used to stock and sell them but no longer do.
 - Of those who dispense GLP-1 agonists, 95 percent say they lose money dispensing them, and 88 percent say they are experiencing shortages or backorders.
 - 96 percent of those who do not dispense GLP-1 agonists say that low or underwater reimbursements are to blame.
- 94 percent report shortages of Adderall or generics, an increase from a similar survey in February 2024 (87 percent).
- 70 percent say they are having a difficult time filling open staff positions. Pharmacy technicians continue to be in the highest demand (80 percent), followed by pharmacists (42 percent), clerks/front-end staff (39 percent), and delivery drivers (19 percent). *[NOTE: As is the case throughout the survey results, these numbers are specific to independent pharmacies. They should not be used when discussing other settings.]*

1. In July 23 testimony on Capitol Hill, executives from Express Scripts, CVS Caremark, and OptumRx made several questionable claims about their interactions with patients and unaffiliated pharmacies. Express Scripts' president, for example, said that "pharmacies can always redline a contract back to us and negotiate." Prior to July 23, were you ever successful at redlining and negotiating contracts with Express Scripts?

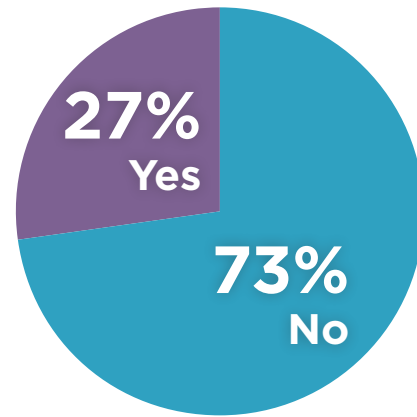


2. Since July 23, have you been successful at redlining and negotiating contracts with Express Scripts?



3. Have you finalized your contracts for participation in CY25 Medicare Part D pharmacy networks?

- No, I have not finalized all my CY25 Part D contracts and do not know which plans I will be participating in.
- Yes, I have finalized all my CY25 Part D contracts and know which plans I will be participating in.



4. CMS recently released the negotiated prices of the first 10 drugs in the Medicare Drug Price Negotiation Program, which begins Jan. 1, 2026. Under this program, pharmacies will likely be waiting over 30 days for the manufacturer to refund payments, and the average pharmacy will have to float over \$27,000 every month waiting to be made whole from manufacturer refund payments. Does this effect your decision continue to stock these drugs?

- Yes, I am strongly considering not stocking these drugs.
- Yes, I am somewhat considering not stocking these drugs.
- No, I will continue to stock these drugs.

