Doctors frequently switch patients’ medication if they no longer respond to the treatment or experience adverse events, but with non-medical switching, a stable patient’s therapy can be changed solely to lower drug plan costs. Although there is an increased risk of adverse effects, patients may experience a lower-than-normal quit rate. Non-medical switching also increases the potential for legal challenges, and it is important to understand your legal risks.

Legal Liability Growing

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Examining the Evidence

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In the Patient’s Shoes

For many patients, biologics are highly effective at putting their disease in remission, yet they live with anxiety of their medication failing and their symptoms returning. Mawani points out that those who are stable on their biologic treatment do not want to switch to a biosimilar without first consulting their physician.

In the DANBIO registry monitored a large cohort of patients who were mandated to switch to a biosimilar. Although there was no significant change in disease activity after switching, Lau notes that 15% of patients stopped the biosimilar after a year, a higher-than-normal quit rate.

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