

# Ipsos Vantis Study Finds Majority Support for Obesity and Weight Management Drugs

*70% of American Physicians State They Would Make the New Drugs a Standard Therapy Treatment*

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## **Ipsos Vantis Study Finds Majority Support for Obesity and Weight Management Drugs**

***70% of American Physicians State They Would Make the New Drugs a Standard Therapy Treatment***

**Parsippany, NJ, September 8, 2010** – Ipsos Vantis, a major market research supplier to the pharmaceutical industry, recently conducted surveys among physicians to evaluate three new product concepts in the obesity and weight management prescription drug category: Qnexa (Vivus, Inc.), LORQESS/lorcaserin(Arena Pharmaceuticals) and Contrave (Orexigen Therapeutics). The findings include market opportunity assessments and comparisons of key measures against the largest normative data base of new product concepts in the industry.

According to the study, between one-half and two-thirds of primary care physicians would likely (definitely/probably) prescribe these drugs to treat their obese or overweight patients. “This is very likely due to the fact that approximately two-thirds of Americans are either overweight or obese, and physicians are eager to embrace new drug therapies to help reduce or prevent chronic health problems such as diabetes, hypertension and dyslipidemia,” said Thomas Young, Vice President with Ipsos Vantis’ Healthcare practice. “In fact, this is currently one of the most closely watched races in the pharmaceutical industry given that these three drugs will be reviewed for approval by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) within the next few months. With greatly improved efficacy along with more benign side effects compared to currently approved weight loss drugs, the obesity market will quickly shift from unsatisfactory, short term treatments to a major therapeutic category.”

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The study further finds that physicians appear to have a fairly high level of comfort prescribing the drugs, stating that they tend to agree that the new products will generate a lot of buzz in the medical community which translates to a high level of thought leadership among the universe of prescribing physicians. On reviewing the new product concepts, the Ipsos Vantis study found that about one-half of surveyed physicians mentioned that they would recommend the drug to a colleague and at least two-thirds agreed that the products would generate a lot of excitement. Further, among physicians likely to prescribe, approximately 70% stated that they would make the new drugs a standard therapy treatment within a year. However, uptake for the three products will be affected by the likely cautious attitude of physicians with respect to prescribing the drugs and the expectation that the products will not be covered by third party insurance, at least at the time of launch.

“Based on our research, we are forecasting U.S. retail sales for any of these three drugs to exceed \$400 million on an annual basis within 3-5 years of launch,” concludes Young. Given the checkered history of past obesity drug introductions, the FDA is expected to focus on safety issues, and extended clinical trial results since these products could be used long term for weight maintenance. “Compared to its two competitors also up for review by the FDA, we believe that LORQESS/lorcaserin has the best chance of winning approval”, adds Young. “The drug has the competitive advantage of a more benign safety profile and will have clinical trial results extending over a two year period before the FDA review date set for late October.”

The Endocrinologic and Metabolic Drugs Advisory Committee is scheduled to make its decision whether to recommend approval of LORQESS/lorcaserin on September 16, 2010.



*The results in this news release reflect some of the findings from an Ipsos online survey, conducted as part of a Vantis Health Files project in April, 2010 among 1,500 (> 125 exposures per concept) primary care physicians.*

*Vantis Health Files (VHF) is a syndicated service focused on the healthcare industry. VHF is designed to provide insights into the market potential for new healthcare products early in the new product development cycle or in-licensing process. VHF draws on Vantis' forecasting heritage, extending over 30 years and tied into the largest normative database in the healthcare industry. Each calendar quarter Ipsos Vantis fields an online, omnibus survey to physicians to assess early stage new product concepts. The questionnaire is standardized to streamline preparation and fieldwork. In the prescription drug industry these concepts are typically for new investigational drugs that have not yet been approved by the FDA.*

For more details on this and other concept-testing research solutions offered by Ipsos Vantis, visit [www.ipsosna.com](http://www.ipsosna.com).

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