

Cosponsor H.R. 2077, Restoring the Patient's Voice Act

June 6, 2017

Dear Colleague:

Join us in restoring the doctor-patient relationship and helping patients get the care they need by cosponsoring the Restoring the Patient's Voice Act.

When a physician prescribes a particular drug treatment for a patient, the patient's insurance company may require them to try a less expensive treatment, or series of treatments, before they can have access to the drug originally prescribed by their physician. The patient is not able to try the second treatment until the first one is proven to "fail." This protocol is known as "step therapy" and is understandably deployed by insurance companies as they strive to control costs while maintaining high-quality care.

Unfortunately, step therapy protocols often ignore a patient's medical history, such as whether they have already tried certain drugs under a different health insurance plan, or if they have other medical conditions that might interfere with the drug's effect. It may also not take into account whether a certain drug's side effects will affect the patient's ability to perform their job, or if the patient would benefit from a drug that has a different ingestion method or dosage form. Each of these aspects can have a profound influence on a patient's compliance and responsiveness to treatment.

While many insurance companies that utilize step therapy have a process by which the patient can receive an exception, it can be unclear, resulting in excessive back and forth between the provider and the insurance company, thereby delaying care.

The Restoring the Patient's Voice Act would require employer-sponsored health plans that utilize step therapy protocols to establish a clear, effective, and fair exceptions process to allow patients to bypass step therapy requirements in limited circumstances. It would also require health plans to make the exceptions process readily available on their website and include an explanation of how to request an exception and any necessary forms or related contact information.

We encourage you to cosponsor "Restoring the Patients Voice Act" to ensure that physicians remain the ultimate clinical authority over their patient's care. Please contact Lisa Langenderfer in Rep. Brad Wenstrup's office at 5-3164 or Lisa.Langenderfer@mail.house.gov with questions or to cosponsor.

Sincerely,

Brad Wenstrup, DPM
Member of Congress

Raul Ruiz, MD
Member of Congress

Outside Support:

Academy of Integrative Pain Management
Advocacy Council of the American College of Allergy
Asthma and Immunology
The AIDS Institute
Alliance for the Adoption of Innovations in Medicine (Aimed Alliance)
Alliance for Patient Access
Allergy & Asthma Network
American Academy of Dermatology Association
American Autoimmune Related Diseases Association
American College of Rheumatology
American Diabetes Association
American Medical Association
Arthritis Foundation
Coalition of State Rheumatology Organizations
CreakyJoints
Crohn's & Colitis Foundation
Chronic Disease Coalition
Epilepsy Foundation
The Florida Society of Clinical Oncology (FLASCO)
Global Healthy Living Foundation
Hemophilia Federation of America
Hepatitis Foundation International
ICAN, International Cancer Advocacy Network
International Foundation for Autoimmune & Autoinflammatory Arthritis (IFAA)
Lupus and Allied Diseases Association, Inc.
Mended Hearts and Mended Little Hearts
Miles for Migraine
National Eczema Association
National Headache Foundation
National Infusion Center Association
National Psoriasis Foundation
Ohio Foot and Ankle Medical Association
Ohio Osteopathic Association
Ohio State Medical Association
RetireSafe
U.S. Pain Foundation