

Petition to Stop Attempt to Limit Patient Access to Drugs

The Trump administration is proposing new cost reduction changes to your Medicare coverage which will limit the drugs available to you. These changes will negatively affect anyone needing treatment in any of six protected classes of medications. These currently protected classes include CANCER drugs, antidepressants, drugs to treat psychosis, anti-seizure medications, medications to prevent the rejection of transplanted organs, and HIV-AIDS drugs.

The proposed legislative changes would give Medicare insurers the ability to require "step therapy" This means patients will first have to try lower-cost medications even if their doctors disagree as to their effectiveness or if they are appropriate. The proposed legislation would also allow Medicare insurers to remove drugs from their formularies so that they would not be available to their subscribers.

This legislation has a good chance of passing as both the Democrats and the Republicans of the House and Senate have been attacking drug costs in the United States. Blaming drug costs as the main driver of our out-of-control healthcare costs is both misguided and too simple. Blaming only drug costs ignores the many other out-of-control items that go into our healthcare burden, like the out of control costs that are attached to hospital stays, hospital supplies, hospital procedures and unnecessary treatment.

The issue that patients need to respond to is much larger than just Medicare. It is common practice that how Medicare goes so goes Medicaid and the commercial insurers. We need to stop this proposal now before it infects the entire insurance market place.

Any cost savings that might be achieved by this proposal will solely benefit the insurance providers as it will not have any effect on patient co-pays or deductibles. Patients would continue to be personally burdened by the high cost of their drugs and the insurance providers will be able to negotiate better pricing, putting the difference into their corporate pockets.

The changes being proposed can only hurt patients. The time has come to let our members of congress and the president know that we demand that Medicare continue to protect people with cancer, those who need antidepressant medications, drugs to treat psychosis, anti-seizure medications, medications to prevent the rejection of transplanted organs, and HIV-AIDS drugs.

Patients need their doctors to make treatment decisions, not insurance companies. Our doctors have OUR best interests in mind; our insurance companies have THEIR own best interests driving their decision making.

We demand that Medicare continues to protect the six protected classes of medication. To not continue to offer this protection is bad medicine, is bad governance, endangers lives and would be a disgrace on our nation.

Cancer ABCs has started a national petition drive and we have been joined by Prostate Cancer International to let our members of congress know that we the people object to these changes.

Please consider having your organization join us by becoming a co-sponsor. Co-sponsors will be named, along with their web address, on the petition in the order in which they join us. Co-sponsors are asked to alert their mailing lists about this petition and to encourage that people on their mailing lists sign on and also have their friends and families sign on.

In addition, we ask that you personally sign the petition, have your family members sign the petition, reach out to your friends, your online and social media communities and ask that they support us.

During the Obama Administration there was an attempt to roll back some of these protections, but an out pouring from Americans stopped the planned action. We need to do this again.

Please sign the petition and get your communities to join with us. It is all of our lives that are at risk. To read and sign the petition, go to: <https://bit.ly/2AznunU>.

Thank You,

Joel www.cancerABCs.org