



June 1, 2020

The Honorable Representative Scott Lipps
Ohio House of Representatives
77 S. High St.
Columbus, OH 43215

Re: HB 469 – Protect patients from copay accumulator programs

Dear Chair Lipps and members of the House Health Committee,

The Chronic Disease Coalition is a nonprofit organization that advocates for patients with a wide range of chronic health conditions, including diabetes, multiple sclerosis, rheumatoid arthritis and kidney disease, to name just a few. Because of the need for regular and often expensive treatment, these patients frequently face disease-based discrimination from large health insurers and other related interest groups. On behalf of our members and allies in Ohio, we urge you to support HB 469 and protect patients from harmful copay accumulator programs.

Copay accumulator programs prevent a patient's copay card or coupon from counting toward their out-of-pocket limits, forcing patients to bear a higher burden for their treatment costs, while insurers pocket the savings. Nearly 60 percent of commercially insured patients are enrolled in plans that have the capability to implement copay accumulator programs unless protects are enacted and enforced.¹

These programs have a significant impact on patients, who are forced to make decisions between paying for their treatment or rent. Unfortunately, this often leads to patients abandoning treatment, which can lead to serious health complications and higher health care costs in the future. Research indicates that when a patient's cost-sharing exceeds \$250, nearly 70 percent of patients abandon their treatment.²

Moreover, insurers claim that copay coupons incentivize patients and providers to utilize specialty medications when a generic equivalent will suffice. Yet nearly 90 percent of copay coupons are used by patients to afford medications that have no generic alternatives.³ Copay accumulator programs are simply used by health plans to increase their bottom lines. In fact, where copay accumulator programs were implemented, plans collected \$10,500 in payments from the beneficiary and copay coupons, as compared to \$3,500 in payments when copay assistance counted toward a patient's deductible.⁴

This bipartisan legislation addresses copay accumulator programs and works to protect vulnerable patients from high out-of-pocket costs. HB 469 requires insurers to apply all copay

cards and coupons towards a patient's deductible unless there is a "drug for which there is a medically generic equivalent."

Copay accumulator programs create affordability challenges for Ohioans who rely on regular, and sometimes lifesaving, treatment to effectively manage their condition. Ohioans cannot wait any longer to have the patient protections in HB 469 and we respectfully urge you to prioritize the passage of this legislation.

Thank you in advance for supporting patients throughout Ohio.

Respectfully,



Scott Bruun
Executive Director
Chronic Disease Coalition

Sources

1. <https://www.drugchannels.net/2018/12/copay-accumulator-update-widespread.html>
2. <https://www.kff.org/uninsured/fact-sheet/key-facts-about-the-uninsured-population/>
3. IMS Institute For Healthcare Informatics. (2014) *Patient Savings Program Use Analysis*. Retrieved from http://162.44.221.25/files/web/IMSH%20Institute/Healthcare%20Briefs/Patient_Savings_Program_Impact_Analysis.pdf
4. <https://www.nastad.org/sites/default/files/Uploads/2018/copayaccumulatorfactsheet.pdf>