

On behalf of the OSMA's 16,000 members, we write today to express our enthusiastic support for SB 129, legislation designed to update Ohio's insurer prior authorization process.

SB 129, sponsored jointly by Senator Randy Gardner and Senator Capri Cafaro, is legislation that presents healthy and efficient modifications for how health insurers conduct "prior authorization" (PA). As you may know, PA is a process that requires physicians and/or their staff to ask permission from a patient's insurance company before prescribing certain medications or performing certain medical treatments.

Since March of 2015, the OSMA has been negotiating this issue with the insurance industry. In early December, this legislation was passed unanimously out of committee and the Ohio Senate.

SB 129 has a number of provisions that will make the PA process more transparent, more fair, and more patient-focused. Specifically, the bill proposes the following:

- Ensures that PA requirements or restrictions are listed on the health insurer's website;
- Allows providers and patients to obtain PA's through a web-based system;
- Ensures that any new or future PA requirements are disclosed prior to the new requirement being implemented;
- Guarantees that once a PA has been approved, the insurer will not retroactively deny the service based upon previously approved medical necessity or coverage criteria;
- Guarantees a faster turnaround on PA requests and a streamlined appeals process in the event a prior authorization denied.

At least fifteen other states have enacted legislation addressing the issue of prior authorization. And while the legislation varies by state, all include measures that strengthen the communication between patients, providers, pharmacies and insurers, ultimately making the PA process easier for patients to be granted coverage for the care they need.

While the OSMA has taken the lead on this legislation, there are more than 70 (and counting) other organizations that are supporting the bill. They include:

American Medical Association
Academy of Medicine of Cincinnati
The Academy of Medicine of Cleveland & Northern Ohio
The Academy of Medicine of Toledo and Lucas County
Akron Children's Hospital

Alcohol & Drug Abuse Prevention Assn. of Ohio
American Academy of Pain Management
American Academy of Pediatrics, Ohio Chapter
American Cancer Society
American College of Surgeons, Ohio Chapter
American Congress of Obstetricians & Gynecologists, Ohio Section
American Lung Association in Ohio and Michigan
American Society of Clinical Oncology
The Arthritis Foundation
Buckeye Art Therapy Association, Inc.
Butler County Medical Society
Cancer Support Community Central Ohio
Cleveland Clinic
Cleveland Kidney and Hypertension Consultants, Inc
Coalition for Healthy Communities
CoverMyMeds
Drug-Free Action Alliance
First Dayton Cancer Care
Holzer Health System
ID Consultants
Kettering Health Network
Kunesh Eye Center, Inc
Lake Health
Lorain County Medical Society
Mental Health & Addiction Advocacy Coalition
MetroHealth System
Mount Carmel Health System
Multiethnic Advocates for Cultural Competence
National Alliance on Mental Illness of Ohio
National Association of Social Workers-Ohio Chapter
National MS Society
National Patient Advocate Foundation
North Ohio Heart
NorthEast Ohio Regenerative Medicine
Ohio Academy of Family Physicians
Ohio Association of Child Caring Agencies
Ohio Association of Community Health Centers
Ohio Association of County Behavioral Health Authorities
Ohio Association of Rheumatology
Ohio Bleeding Disorders Council
Ohio Chapter of the American College of Cardiology
Ohio Children's Hospital Association
Ohio Citizen Advocates for Addiction Recovery

Ohio Council for Home Care & Hospice
Ohio Council of Behavioral Health & Family Services Providers
Ohio Counseling Association
Ohio Dental Association
Ohio Dermatological Association
Ohio Empowerment Coalition
Ohio Federation for Children's Mental Health
Ohio Foot and Ankle Medical Association
Ohio Gastroenterology Society
Ohio Hematology Oncology Society
Ohio Hospital Association
Ohio Ophthalmological Society
Ohio Optometric Association
Ohio Osteopathic Association
Ohio Pharmacy Association
Ohio Psychiatric Physicians Association
Ohio Psychological Association
Ohio State Chiropractic Association
Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation
The Ohio State University, Wexner Medical Center
OhioHealth
Orthopedic ONE
Paul F Vanek Jr, MD, Inc.
Premier Behavioral Health Services
Prevent Blindness, Ohio Affiliate
Sisters of Charity Health System
Summit County Medical Society
TWC Pharmacy and Wellness Centers, LLC
University Hospitals
Universal Health Care Action Network of Ohio

This legislative proposal is a priority issue for the OSMA and we would greatly appreciate your support of SB 129. As always, please feel free to contact us if you have any questions or comments about this proposal.