



To: Members of the Ohio House Health Committee

Da: April 3, 2018

Re: HB72 – Improves step therapy

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On behalf of the Ohio Dermatological Association, a member of the 60-member coalition representing thousands of providers and patients throughout Ohio, **we urge you to support House Bill 72.**

The bipartisan legislation, sponsored by Representatives Terry Johnson and Nickie Antonio, will provide patients timely access to the medications they need. Members of our coalition have testified at bill hearings, advocacy days, and individual meetings with legislators over the past two years on the adverse impact that step therapy/fail first requirements have caused our patients.

**HB72** improves step therapy protocols, a one-size-fits-all utilization management tool used by health insurance plans, which require patients to try and fail one or more prescription drugs before coverage is provided for the medication chosen by the patient's health care provider.

We understand the need to contain health care costs, but we, as dermatologists, use many of these medications and are concerned because step therapy algorithm requirements do not take into account the physician's clinical judgement as well as the patient's personal medical history.

**HB72** does **not** prohibit insurers from using step therapy and it does **not** require insurers to cover any specific medication. It seeks to improve the step therapy process by balancing cost containment with common sense patient needs.

**HB72** would ensure that step therapy decisions are based on clinical practice guidelines or medical or scientific evidence. It would require insurers to have a clear, convenient process for physicians to pursue a step therapy exemption. The bill also specifies the conditions under which it is medically appropriate to exempt patients from step therapy.

Excluding physicians' clinical judgment from patients' treatment plans creates a barrier to getting the right care at the right time. Step therapy can undermine physicians' ability to effectively treat patients and lower quality of care, resulting in set-backs and disease progression for patients.

In the clinical field of Dermatology, we deal with step therapy boundaries on a daily basis. Here are a few stories to show the negative effects that Step Therapy has on my patients.

Anthony C. is a 34-year-old male on Caresource who presented on 9/22/17 with cystic acne. We are still fighting to get him approved for Isotretinoin - the medication that can arrest his scarring acne. We have jumped through many hoops and have changed his medications as requested on several occasions. Meanwhile the scarring continues, 6 months into therapy and we still have not used the medication we know will help him.

Nathan B. is a 26-year-old male on Caresource with severe psoriasis. We started him on what is recognized by Caresource as the first step. He had little improvement so we changed to their 2nd step biologic and his psoriasis improved from 45% to 7% BSA (body surface area). Wonderful, but the current standard of "control" is less than 3% BSA. We prescribed a 3rd medication but the patient tired after waiting 6 weeks for this one and decided to cease trying and go back to the 2nd.

Jill T. is a 47-year-old female on commercial insurance. We have seen her for many years for her significant psoriasis. She has been controlled on her biologic since 2016. We have been trying to renew it from 1/19/18-3/14/18. 2 months of waiting for the medicine to simply be renewed.

John H. is a 36-year-old male on commercial insurance. He also has prominent psoriasis that takes a modern biologic medication to control. This was approved 11/17/17 for 24 months, but we still had to fight until 2/12/18 for the patient to actually get it. That's 3 months of waiting after the medication was approved.

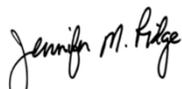
William F. is a 71-year-old male on Medicare. His Medicare part "D" took from 2/6/18 until 3/23/18 to approve his biologic for his severe psoriasis. That's 6 weeks for an answer.

This happens over and over. The players change but the story stays the same...delay...change requirements...delay some more...maybe they'll get tired of waiting!

**Ohioans cannot wait any longer to have the patient protections in HB72 and we respectfully urge you to prioritize the passage of this legislation.** Ohio would join the growing list of 16 states that have enacted similar step therapy legislation, including Indiana, West Virginia, Iowa, Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, and Texas.

Thank you in advance for supporting patients throughout Ohio.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Ridge, MD  
President, Ohio Dermatological Association