



OHIO PODIATRIC MEDICAL ASSOCIATION, DBA
OHIO FOOT AND ANKLE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
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JIMELLE RUMBERG, PHD, CAE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

April 11, 2018

The Honorable Representative Stephen A. Huffman
Ohio House of Representatives
77 S. High St.
Columbus, OH 43215

Re: HB72 - Improves step therapy

Dear Chair Huffman:

The Ohio Foot and Ankle Medical Association (OHFAMA) is a participant with the 60-member coalition that represents thousands of providers and patients throughout Ohio. In that context, OHFAMA respectfully urges 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. Over the past two years, the adverse impact that step therapy/fail first requirements have caused our patients, has been recalled at bill hearings and individual meetings with legislators. Ohioans should not have to wait any longer to have the patient protections in HB72.

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 OHFAMA is concerned. Why? Because step therapy algorithm requirements do not consider the physician's clinical judgement as well as the patient's personal medical history.

Let us be clear, there is misinformation circulating about what the HB 72 does and does not do.

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

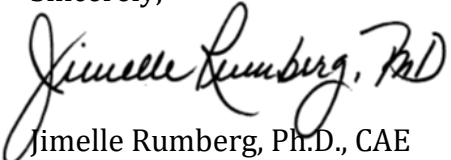
- HB72 ensures that step therapy decisions are based on clinical practice guidelines or medical or scientific evidence.
- It requires insurers to have a clear, convenient process for physicians to pursue a step therapy exemption.
- The bill does specify the conditions under which it is medically appropriate 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 setbacks and disease progression for patients. Ohio's citizens deserve better and should not have to suffer needlessly.

The Ohio Foot and Ankle Medical Association is a specialty medical association comprised of 670 foot and ankle podiatric physicians and surgeons. Our expertise in foot and ankle medicine and surgery along with wound care is especially noteworthy in the lower extremity. Created setbacks can undeniably result in loss of limbs and possibly life. Are those setbacks ones we want to take for ourselves and our families?

Lastly, Ohio would join the growing list of 16 states that have enacted similar step therapy legislation, including our neighbors of Indiana and West Virginia, as well as Iowa, Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, and Texas. We respectfully urge you to *prioritize* the passage of HB 72.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jimelle Rumberg, Ph.D." The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jimelle Rumberg, Ph.D., CAE
Executive Director