



Ohio Osteopathic Association

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April 10, 2018

The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman, Chair
House Health Committee
Ohio House of Representatives
77 S. High Street, 12th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215-6111

Re: Proponent Testimony in Support of H.B 72, Step Therapy Protocols

Dear Chairman Huffman, Vice Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Antonio, & Members of the House Health Committee:

As President of the Ohio Osteopathic Association, I am writing in support of HB 72, which establishes requirements for step therapy protocols used by health insuring corporations in Ohio. The OOA represents approximately 4,700 osteopathic physicians (DOs) in the state of Ohio and also advocates for the Ohio University Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine. DOs represent 16 percent of the total physicians practicing in Ohio and 28 percent of the state's family physicians.

Step therapy protocols, established and utilized by Ohio's health insuring corporations, require their insured patients to use specific medications *without first considering the patient's medical history*. Step Therapy protocols require patients to "fail first" on preferred medications listed on the insurer's formulary before another medication can be utilized in its place. In some cases, these protocols can interfere with effective quality care and result in disease progression in a patient before the most effective medication can be utilized by the physician to treat that patient's condition.

HB 72 does not eliminate step therapy but instead ensures the protocols used by insurers are transparent, consistent from insurer to insurer, and have a standardized appeal process to allow expedited overrides when appropriate for quality patient care. 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.

HB 72 is NOT a mandate but rather process reform. According to a memo from the Ohio Legislative Services Commission, dated April 2, 2018: "*A mandated benefit is, in short, any required insurance coverage for a specific service. **Sub. H.B. 72 does not require insurers to cover specified services or expand coverage. Instead, it establishes***

requirements and procedures insurers must follow if they choose to implement step therapy protocols. “

Physician and patient advocates have been meeting with interested stakeholders to address concerns in the original draft. The latest version of the bill incorporates changes requested by the business community to ensure cost-effective and evidence based patient care.

The Ohio Osteopathic Association strongly supports H.B. 72 and urges you to favorably report this bill out of Committee.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Stiltner', with a large, stylized initial 'S'.

Sean D. Stiltner, DO
President