

February 9, 2022

Chairman Brinkman, Vice Chair Lampton, Ranking Member Miranda, and members of the Ohio House Insurance Committee, thank you for providing the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on House Bill 451.

UC Health is an integrated academic health system serving the Greater Cincinnati region. In partnership with the University of Cincinnati, UC Health combines clinical expertise and compassion with research and teaching. As the region's academic health care system, patients travel to UC Health for subspecialized, world-class care only we can provide. We are innovators, relentless in our pursuit of the best in medicine and able to care for the most complex and critically ill patients. We hold the highest standard of patient care, clinical research and medical education.

Our patients at UC Health seek care at our facilities because of the high quality care and compassion our clinicians provide. Many of these patients who are suffering from cancer, autoimmune, and other genetic diseases require customized prescription regimens that in many instances, may need to be adjusted at the time of treatment. Factors that can impact a change in a patient's medication dose can include a change in the patient's weight, renal function, and numerous laboratory and biological markers. With UC Health's specialty pharmacy, we have the ability to make those alterations without delay, ensuring our patients are receiving the proper care at the proper time.

However, our patient's insurers are implementing the business model known as "white bagging" that does not permit us the ability to provide this care. White bagging of prescription drugs is the title given to the practice where an insurance company forces a patient to receive their medication from the insurer's specialty pharmacy or another pharmacy not located at the site of patient care. The medication must be ordered from the specialty pharmacy, and then delivered to the hospital to be administered to the patient. White bagging drugs for patients can cause the following problems that negatively impact patient care and safety:

- **Creates logistical concerns for clinical management and drug safety for the patient.**
 - Our clinicians are reliable upon the patient's medication to arrive on time for the patient's visit. If the drugs do not arrive on time, that patient cannot receive care when they arrive for their appointment.

- **Medication could be wasted, and patients could not receive the proper amount of medication at the time of their visit.**
 - As mentioned earlier, patients may need their medication dosage adjusted at the time of their visit. When a drug is white bagged that drug can only be used for that patient. If a patient requires less than the white bagged drug, the remaining dosage of the drug is wasted. Further, if a patient needs a higher dosage than that received

from the insurer's specialty pharmacy, the patient cannot receive the care they need. It is important to note that the exact same drug is available on campus at UC Health's specialty pharmacy.

- **White bagged medication could be jeopardized by disruptions in the supply chain.**
 - The white bagging process requires a seamless delivery of medication to a hospital for the patient to receive care. Many of the drugs needed for our patients must be temperature controlled and treated with immense care. By requiring a drug to be shipped to a patient's hospital, the process introduces another variable of unneeded risk to the drug's viability. There have been instances in Ohio where white bagged drugs have sat at loading docks and could not be used because they were not properly cared for during the time of delivery to the hospital.

- **White Bagging can lead to higher out-of-pocket costs for patients.**
 - In many instances, the practice of white bagging removes the payment for these vital medications from a patient's medical benefit and places the coverage in a patient's pharmacy benefit. Typically, patients face higher co-pays and deductibles for drugs covered under a pharmacy benefit plan when compared to a patient's medical benefit plan.

House Bill 451 pragmatically approaches this issue by not prohibiting the practice of white bagging in Ohio, but instead, prohibits health plans from universally mandating white bagging of medications for their beneficiaries. This legislation provides the opportunity for health plans and providers to work together on private contractual agreements with the goal to improve patient care and outcomes. By removing white bagging mandates, Ohio is placing patient care at the forefront of this important issue. We strongly support House Bill 451, and respectfully request the Ohio House Insurance Committee favorably report this legislation.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony for House Bill 451. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,



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UC Health