



March 21, 2017

The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman
Chair of the House Health & Aging Committee
House of Representatives
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Chairman Huffman:

As an Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN) working with pediatric patients and the Legislative Chair of the Ohio Chapter of the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners, the step therapy bill is imperative to effective treatment of patients.

HB 72 will require insurance companies to be transparent with patients and prescribers about the process required to request an override on certain medications. The American College of Preventative Medicine wrote a clinical reference for Medication Adherence in 2011, which describes predictors of medication non-adherence. These predictors include: side effects or fear of medication side effects, cost of medication, copayment, or both and barriers to access to care or medications

An example that is commonly seen in pediatrics, is the use of a medication called Metformin. Obesity is an epidemic in our country and with them epidemic we are seeing an increase in the incidence of Type 2 diabetes mellitus in children. Metformin is often first line therapy for Type 2 DM. This medication has miserable gastrointestinal side effects. Additionally, the medication comes in a very large pill which can pose issues with swallowing. For both of these reasons, adherence/compliance to a prescribed medication regimen is a constant issue.

As a provider, I am aware that there is an extended release form of the medication that is better tolerated and additionally, there is a liquid form as well. However, currently patients have to “fail therapy” on typical metformin before the extended release or liquid can be prescribed. Because

of this, patients are experiencing side effects to show “failure” which causes angst, hesitation with future prescribed medications.

This is just one example of why step therapy should be more transparent to patients. Medication prescribing is difficult when insurance is directing choice. The provider knows best for the patient.

Again, I am asking you to support HB 72 and your help to ensure the full passage of this bill out of the House and onto the Governor his signature.

Sincerely,

Mandi Cafasso, RN, DNP, CNP

Legislative Chair

Ohio Chapter of the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners

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