



January 8, 2018

The Honorable Eileen Cody, Chair
The Honorable Nicole Macri, Vice Chair
Honorable Members
Health Care & Wellness Committee
Washington House of Representatives

257A John L. O'Brien Building
P.O. Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600

C/O: Kendra Coburn
Legislative Assistant
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RE: HB 2310 (Representatives Jinkins, Slatter, Harris, DeBolt, Sullivan, Riccelli, Macri, and Tharinger): AN ACT Relating to prescription drug insurance continuity of care.
(In Support).

Chairman Cody, Vice Chairman Macri, Honorable Members:

House Bill 2310, an important continuity of care bill, is scheduled to be heard on January 12th in the House Health & Wellness Committee. The legislation would protect patients from mid-year formulary switches or co-pay increases during the enrollment year. This is an especially important bill for the protection of patients in Washington and I urge your support for it.

The practice of “non-medical switching” is rapidly becoming one that insurers are utilizing to save costs for their business model, although switching a patient’s medication arbitrarily is often not in the best interest of the patient. When the quality and continuity of care is interrupted, it often results in a deterioration of the patient’s health and the result may actually be a sharp increase in the cost of care for everyone. The cost of critical care in a hospital is actually thousands of dollars each day. We strongly believe that the prescriber/patient relationship is paramount in order to achieve quality health care, and we oppose any action on the part of an insurer to deny coverage or to increase the cost of a patient’s co-pay for a medication or therapy that is needed by the patient and that the health plan covered initially. Two of our nation’s largest Pharmacy Benefit Managers, Express Scripts and Caremark, have announced that they intend to “switch” over eighty medications on their national formularies in 2018, which will affect over 200 million patients nation-wide. We believe this is unconscionable.

House Bill 2310 is an important step forward in the protection of patients from arbitrary and potentially dangerous mid-year switching. In addition, it would protect patients from inappropriate and unnecessary co-pay increases, which could mean the difference in regard to whether a parent chooses to take their needed medication, or pay the bills to support their family. It is timely, it is needed, and we urge your support for it!

The Chronic Care Policy Alliance is a multi-state alliance of chronic care coalitions and collaboratives, that serves to provide support and policy guidance for state chronic care organizations in the support of chronic care patients. Our mission is to:

- Provide a national framework for state chronic care policy collaboratives
- Serve as a resource for those collaboratives to work together in the interest of good public policy for chronic care patients
- Engage in policy deliberations
- Represent chronic care patients and advocates at the state and federal level

Thank you for your kind support of this important legislation!

Sincerely,



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