

February 29, 2024

Honorable Susan Donovan
Chair, House Health and Human Services Committee
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

Re: H-7625- Accident and Sickness Insurance Policies – Insurance Coverage for Prevention of HIV

Dear Chair Donovan and Members of the House Health, and Human Services Committee:

Please accept the Rhode Island Health Center Association's letter in support of House Bill 7625. This bill would eliminate prior authorization and step therapy requirements and prohibit copay or deductible to obtain HIV prescriptions covered by a health insurance contract, plan, or policy.

The Rhode Island Department of Health 2022 HIV, Sexually Transmitted Infections, Viral Hepatitis, and Tuberculosis Surveillance Report showed 2,749 Rhode Islanders were living with HIV in 2021; 76.2% diagnosed are engaged in care, and 69.8% have achieved viral suppression. Medicines such as pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) are critical to those at risk or exposed to HIV to reduce infection and harmful health effects that can result from contracting HIV. Coverage for effective preventative medications ensures equitable access and adherence.

Community Health Centers in Rhode Island provide medical, dental, and behavioral health care services for 200,000 individuals, regardless of their ability to pay. Health centers serve an important role in reducing HIV by providing testing and treatment, including on-demand PrEP, for all members of the community.

Thank you.

M. Campbell

Melissa Campbell
Policy Manager

Rhode Island Health Center Association members include:
Blackstone Valley Community Health Care Inc. ~ Comprehensive Community Action Program ~
East Bay Community Action Program ~ Providence Community Health Centers ~
Thundermist Health Center ~ Tri-County Community Action ~
WellOne Primary Medical and Dental Care ~ Wood River Health