

February 19, 2024

The Honorable Susan R. Donovan
Chair, House Health and Human Services Committee
2 Rego Avenue
Bristol, Rhode Island 02809

Re: SUPPORT – H7365

Dear Honorable Susan R. Donovan:

We Support H7365, an act which ensures patient choice in dispensing of clinician-administered drugs for Rhode Island.

The practice of white bagging occurs when insurance companies make coverage of needed patient-specific medications contingent on the medication being distributed from a third-party specialty pharmacy versus allowing providers to buy and then bill for the medication and its administration or buy from a provider pharmacy of choice.

Mandating that providers can no longer procure and manage specialty drugs for their patients disrupts carefully constructed systems of care. Insurance companies should not be able to dictate that a patient must depend on a pharmacy benefit manager to deliver their needed therapies to that healthcare facility. These policies present a number of challenges for patients and providers, such as:

Patient access to medication: Implemented policies have the potential to lead to unavoidable delays in patient receipt of the drug due to processing delays (i.e. prior authorization), lack of sufficient pharmacy inventory, or travel barriers. **Patient adherence:** Policies limit patients from receiving prescriptions from their preferred pharmacy. Due to the inability of contracted pharmacies to fill prescriptions in an expedited fashion, patients frequently experience delays in medication receipt, resulting in medication nonadherence. Delays can prevent patients from starting or continuing their medication in a timely manner, negatively impacting their cancer treatment cycle. **Utilization of resources:** Patients that experience prescription delays may need to present in person to receive their medications. This requires a shift in time and resources to allow for timely in-clinic administration, and management of adverse events (i.e., febrile neutropenia requiring a hospital admission).

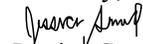
We believe that patients and providers must have choice in obtaining clinician-administered drugs, and that payers should not be permitted to unilaterally require methods of distribution that disrupt the patient experience and impair the provider's ability to provide optimal patient care. For these reasons, **we support** the passage of H7365.

We appreciate your continued commitment to improve access and delivery of high-quality healthcare to all Rhode Islanders.

Sincerely,



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