

All Cancers Congress

May 4, 2020

Dear Governors of the United States:

The undersigned organizations convene under or support the All Cancers Congress (ACC), a group of cancer non-profits dedicated to working together for the benefit of all cancer patients. We write to make you aware of the issue many cancer patients have in maintaining a steady and secure supply of prescription treatments and urge you to take action to ensure these patients have access to life-saving medications throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has advised those who take medications to obtain an extra supply of medically necessary prescription medications in order to comply with social distancing guidelines and to maintain a treatment plan. However, many insurers continue to implement strict limits on refills of prescription medications. Within the cancer community, this can cause undue burden to those with cancer, putting them in unnecessarily high-risk situations, including more frequent trips to a pharmacy.

While we appreciate the work of Congress in responding to this issue by enacting Section 3714 of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act, which requires Medicare prescription drug plans and Medicare Advantage plans to allow part D covered drugs for 90-day supply to Medicare enrollees, states should take similar action for Medicaid and private insurers to ensure continued access to medications and social distancing during the ongoing crisis. We specifically urge you to further relax refill and timing limits by requiring that ALL payers allow for the provision of up to 90-day supplies of medications as recommended by the CDC, which will reduce return visits to the pharmacy. Additionally, we advocate that you require flexibility with mail-order pharmacies and other home deliveries and waive prior authorization and utilization management requirements.

We are aware that most states have taken some of these actions and are working through the 1135 waiver process in Medicaid to waive or suspend prior authorization requirements through the end of the crisis. Most states have allowed the use of out-of-state pharmacies, but cancer patients continue to find it challenging to get necessary treatment in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic due to cost and access. Because so many patients are experiencing problems affording treatment in an increasingly difficult economic environment, we ask that if you have not already done so, you act with urgency to ensure continued access to medications and protect the most vulnerable residents of your state.

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We thank you for your prompt attention to this matter. Please contact Raymond Wezik at rwezik@myeloma.org, Elridge Proctor at eproctor@go2foundation.org or Serota, Kimberly kserota@auanet.org with questions or to provide more information.

Respectfully,

American Society of Clinical Oncology
American Urological Association
Cancer and Careers
CancerCare
Fight Colorectal Cancer
FORCE: Facing Our Risk of Cancer Empowered
GO2 Foundation for Lung Cancer
International Myeloma Foundation
LUNgevity Foundation
Susan G. Komen
ZERO - The End of Prostate Cancer