



Dear Florida Legislator:

We appreciate your work during the 2023 Legislative Session to explore solutions to lower out-of-pocket costs for patients. Your efforts in partnership with Governor Ron DeSantis to increase accountability and transparency around pharmacy benefit managers, or PBMs, was necessary and important. But there's more work to be done to ensure Florida champions patient-first policies.

With a focus on increasing patient access and lowering costs, we recommend tested, realistic solutions to directly lower the out-of-pocket cost for patients at the pharmacy counter and ensure access to affordable, safe, and innovative medications and treatments.

- Ensure All Copays Count:** Thousands of Floridians with chronic conditions rely on copay assistance, like coupons or discount cards, to help them pay out-of-pocket costs for their medicines. Unfortunately, many insurers and PBMs are using copayment accumulators, which prevent assistance from counting toward the patients' cost sharing requirements, such as annual deductibles, copays, and other out-of-pocket expenses. Patients must continue to pay before full coverage kicks in, often resulting in a surprise bill of several thousand dollars. All money applied to purchasing a patient's prescription, whether a manufacturer's copay card, nonprofit program, or financial assistance from a relative, should be counted toward a patient's deductible or out-of-pocket spending cap. Florida has an opportunity to join 19 states that have passed legislation to end copay accumulator policies.
- Share Discounts & Rebates with Patients at the Point-of-Sale:** Insurers and PBMs negotiate significant rebates and discounts when purchasing medications from drug manufacturers but fail to pass those rebates and discounts on to patients at the point-of-sale at the pharmacy counter – instead pocketing as a profit. As a result, Floridians with chronic conditions are paying nearly double what their insurer is paying for their medication. It's time to require insurers and PBMs to share the savings directly with patients by applying negotiated savings at the point-of-sale.

- **Ensure Patients Have Access to the Right Medicine at the Right Time:** Step therapy, prior authorization, and non-medical switching are utilization management tools employed by insurers and PBMs to control costs – and make it difficult for a patient to receive the medication or treatment originally prescribed by their doctor. Healthcare providers should not be forced to make decisions based on bureaucratic protocols and need transparent processes and timelines to ensure timely access to vital medications and treatments.

Unfortunately, proposals looking toward international models, such as the International Drug Reference Pricing or government price setting policies, create greater access barriers without lowering costs for most Floridians. Today, a record number of new medicines are launching globally, but patients in most countries — including many developed countries — can access only a small share due to government price setting policies. On average, cancer patients in many of these countries have access to as little as 40% of new cancer medicines available through a government health plan, while cancer patients in the US have access to 94%. Cancer patients in these countries also wait an average of 28 months longer for coverage of these new medicines than US patients. This is unacceptable for any patient fighting a life-altering diagnosis. These policies also threaten US innovation which is currently responsible for 57% of all new medicines, with many research institutions and companies in Florida’s thriving life sciences ecosystem contributing to this innovation.

We urge you to champion patient-first policies that will result in instant savings in out-of-pocket costs at the pharmacy counter while preserving and increasing access to innovative medications and treatments.

Thank you,

Acromegaly Community  
AiArthritis, International Foundation for Autoimmune & Autoinflammatory Arthritis  
Alzheimer’s & Dementia Resource Center  
American Senior Alliance  
BioFlorida  
Biomarker Collaborative  
Central Florida Behavioral Health Network  
Epilepsy Agency of the Big Bend  
Epilepsy Alliance Florida  
Exon 20 Group  
Florida Chapter, American College of Physicians  
Florida Gastroenterologic Society  
Florida Osteopathic Medical Association  
Gaucher Community Alliance  
Gilda’s Club South Florida, Inc.  
H.E.A.L.S. of the South  
ICAN, International Cancer Advocacy Network  
Infusion Access Foundation  
Lupus and Allied Diseases Association, Inc.  
MET Crusaders  
Multiple Sclerosis Foundation  
National Infusion Center Association (NICA)  
Neuropathy Action Foundation (NAF)  
Oncology Managers of Florida  
PDL1 Amplifieds  
Sickle Cell Disease Association of Florida  
South Florida Hispanic Chamber of Commerce  
Spondylitis Association of America