



March 8, 2022

Chairman David B. Hawk
Suite 648
Cordell Hull Building
Nashville, TN 37243

RE: HB 677 – Step Therapy

Chairman David B. Hawk:

On behalf of the Movement Disorders Policy Coalition, I am writing in support of HB 677. This legislation is important in ensuring patients – including those with movement disorders – can access the therapies their health care provider prescribes, in a timely and appropriate manner by providing clear exemptions and approval timelines when step therapy is required.

The [Movement Disorders Policy Coalition](#) (MDPC) serves as a platform from which stakeholders, including health care providers and patients, can provide input on policy decisions impacting patient-centered care for those living with movement disorders. As a coalition of stakeholder groups across the movement disorders space, MDPC advocates at the federal, state, and health plan levels for key health reforms that increase access to personalized care for patients with movement disorders including tardive dyskinesia, Parkinson’s disease, essential tremor, Tourette Syndrome, dystonia, ataxia and Huntington’s disease.

Step therapy is a utilization management tool used by health insurance plans to contain health care costs. Sometimes called “fail first,” step therapy protocols require a patient to try and fail one or more medications, often at lower cost to the insurer, before he or she can access the medication prescribed by their healthcare provider. These step therapy protocols interfere with the physician-patient relationship, and lead to delays in accessing appropriate care, leading to increased burden on both patients and their health care providers.

People living with movement disorders manage complex conditions and treatment regimens, and already experience significant challenges in everyday life. Timely and effective therapy is paramount to ensuring these patients can successfully manage their disease and have quality of life. Therefore, treatment decisions for these patients should be considered on an individual basis, based on the patient’s health care status and clinician’s expertise, rather than based on insurer step therapy protocols. Movement disorders patients need clear, continuous access to the medications that have been demonstrated to treat both the physical and mental health symptoms of their condition.

HB 677 would improve patient access by requiring insurance companies to establish a clear and convenient process for patients and providers to request exceptions from step therapy protocols. While the bill does not prohibit the use of step therapy or limit the number of steps that an insurer can require, it does outline specific instances where an exception to step therapy protocols would be granted. Clear guidelines, improved accessibility, and more efficient

*Movement Disorders Policy Coalition
2020 K Street NW, Suite 505
Washington, DC 20006*

response times to step therapy appeals will help improve access to medications and protect the provider-patient relationship that is critical to successful care

The course of care prescribed by physicians and other healthcare providers is the foundation of patient-centric care. When health care plans interfere with that vital decision making and limit the course of treatment, it jeopardizes the patient's overall health.

On behalf of the Movement Disorders Policy Coalition and our membership, we ask that you support HB 677 and thank you for your leadership on this important issue. If we can provide further details or answer any questions, please reach out to Josie Cooper at jcooper@allianceforpatientaccess.org.

Sincerely,



Josie Cooper
Executive Director
Movement Disorders Policy Coalition

Co-Signing Organizations:

Alliance for Patient Access
American Parkinson Disease Association
Caregiver Action Network
Dallas Area Parkinson Society (DAPS)
Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance
Hawai'i Parkinson Association
HD Reach
National Ataxia Foundation
National Organization for Tardive Dyskinesia
Parkinson's Foundation
Parkinson & Movement Disorder Alliance
The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research