

## RESOLUTION 2023-B

**SUBJECT:** Reducing Burdens in the Utilization of Step Therapy

**SUBMITTED TO:** Michigan Osteopathic Association House of Delegates

**SUBMITTED BY:** Council of Interns and Residents

**REFERRED TO:** Professional Affairs Reference Committee

**RECOMMENDATION:** Approve as Amended

### ACTION TAKEN AT MOA HOD:

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1 **WHEREAS**, Step therapy is a process by which medical insurers (private or public) provide coverage  
2 for ~~MORE EXPENSIVE~~ medications ~~that are more expensive~~, only after ~~the cheaper~~ LESS EXPENSIVE  
3 medications have been prescribed first, even if the LOWER COST medications may be less effective  
4 in the management of the ~~disease~~ MEDICAL condition; and  
5

6 **WHEREAS**, By the time the patient has exhausted treatments as dictated by the step therapy,  
7 ~~patients may further~~ THEIR MEDICAL CONDITION COULD clinically ~~deteriorate~~ WORSEN AS WELL AS  
8 SUFFERING ADVERSE SYMPTOMS AS A CONSEQUENCE ~~and suffer from a greater disease burden~~;  
9 and  
10

11 **WHEREAS**, ~~lack of flexibility and~~ difficulty IN obtaining exceptions by physicians to the step therapy  
12 dedicated regimen, may ultimately increase health care costs; and  
13

14 **WHEREAS**, Insurance-mandated step therapy ~~as a general practice may~~ IS LIKELY TO impede access  
15 to NEWER, innovative therapies; and  
16

17 **WHEREAS**, while utilization management like step therapy defines access for patients, it **OFTEN**  
18 does not keep pace with clinical guidelines\*; and  
19

20 **WHEREAS**, Michigan is one of the few states in the United States that does not have clarity around  
21 the exceptions process, and provides no timeline for submission and approval of exception requests  
22 to the step therapy mandated regimen; now, therefore be it  
23

24 **RESOLVED**, that the MOA provides resources to its members regarding the current framework for  
25 the step therapy exemption process; and, be it further  
26

27 **RESOLVED**, that the MOA advocates to the American Osteopathic Association to work with relevant  
28 stakeholders to ensure step therapy protocols are based on medical criteria and clinical guidelines  
29 developed by independent experts, **AND, BE IT FURTHER**  
30

31 **RESOLVED**, that the MOA advocates to the American Osteopathic Association to work with relevant  
stakeholders to streamline the exemption process **FOR** patients **TO MOVE** from step therapy.

LEAD AUTHORS: Anmol Parda, OMS II; Syed Rizvi, OMS II

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Step therapy is used by numerous public and private insurers in the state of Michigan. While step therapy has been implemented with the goal of reducing health care costs, there are disease states in which step therapy may inadvertently increase health care costs. In particular, step therapy does not do well **of IN THE TREATMENT OF** rare diseases and other medical conditions where new, more effective therapies are produced. For example, when an individual changes insurance plans, they may be required to go off a successful treatment and take a less effective medicine. For rare disease patients, the use of step therapy protocols is particularly concerning, as it can take years to find a diagnosis and a treatment that works. Hence, we are advocating for an exception process to be advocated for at a state level so that clinicians may prescribe treatments outside of the regimen mandated by the step therapy.

#### REFERENCES

<https://www.steptherapy.com/step-therapy-legislation-by-state/>

<https://rarediseases.org/state/michigan/>

[https://rarediseases.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/20220310\\_Safe-Step-Coalition-RFI-Comments\\_Healthy-Futures-Task-Force-Subcommittee-on-Treatments.pdf](https://rarediseases.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/20220310_Safe-Step-Coalition-RFI-Comments_Healthy-Futures-Task-Force-Subcommittee-on-Treatments.pdf)

**\*Researchers at Tufts Medical Center recently found that step therapy was applied to 38.9% of drug coverage decisions, and more than half (55.6%) of those decisions required more steps than the clinical guidelines for diseases like multiple sclerosis, psoriasis, psoriatic arthritis, or chronic migraines.**