



Oncology Nursing Society

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The Honorable Mike Kelly
U.S. House of Representatives
1707 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Larry Bucshon, MD
U.S. House of Representatives
2313 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Suzan DelBene
U.S. House of Representatives
2330 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Ami Bera, MD
U.S. House of Representatives
172 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

June 28, 2024

Dear Representatives Kelly, Bucshon, DelBene, and Bera:

Oncology nurses are leaders in the healthcare arena, committed to continuous learning and leading the transformation of cancer care by advocating for high quality care for people with cancer. Oncology nurses are privileged to support people with cancer through the entire cancer experience, from diagnosis and treatment into survivorship or as they face their end-of-life journey. As such, they provide a unique perspective on improving cancer care and prevention. Given this, **the Oncology Nursing Society (ONS) is proud to support the Improving Seniors' Timely Access to Care Act.**

Generally, the prior authorization process for chemotherapy medications is among the chief "pain points" that face cancer patients and their providers, including oncology nurses who frequently manage this activity. Prior authorizations cause significant delays in care, harming patient outcomes and increasing patient costs. Our members report that prior authorizations and other forms of utilization management are a tremendous strain on resources, diverting oncology nurses' attention away from direct patient care activities to instead battle with insurance representatives who often lack relevant clinical expertise and inappropriately deny medically necessary care. The burden has become so great that it is a major contributor to many health care professionals leaving the field of medicine altogether.

As you know, this legislation would streamline the prior authorization process for Medicare Advantage, lower the amount of time that insurers have to consider prior authorization requests, and encourage Medicare Advantage plans to consult with providers to develop authorization processes based on practice guidelines. Doing so would free up providers to focus on direct patient care, greatly improving the patient experience for the more than 33 million Americans in Medicare Advantage plans.

Thank you for introducing this important legislation. We look forward to working with you to improve access to timely, appropriate oncology care. For more information, please contact Jaimie Vickery, ONS Director of Government Affairs and Advocacy, at healthpolicy@ons.org.

Sincerely,

The Oncology Nursing Society

About ONS: The Oncology Nursing Society (ONS) is a professional organization of over 35,000 registered nurses and other healthcare providers dedicated to excellence in patient care, education, research, and administration in oncology nursing. ONS members are a diverse group of professionals who represent a variety of professional roles, practice settings, and subspecialty practice areas. Oncology nurses are leaders in the healthcare arena, committed to continuous learning and leading the transformation of cancer care by advocating for high quality care for people with cancer.