Legislation Introduced to Protect Patients From Increased Medications Costs During COVID-19

Legislation Would Delay Implementation of 2021 NBPP

Washington, DC – On Thursday, July 16, Rep. Donald McEachin (VA-4) and Rep. Rodney Davis (IL-13) introduced a bipartisan bill protecting patients from hidden copay accumulator programs during the COVID-19 pandemic. The bill would delay the implementation of the 2021 Notice of Benefit and Payment Parameter (NBPP) final rule allowing health plans to implement copay accumulators until a year after the COVID-19 health emergency is lifted.

When health plans implement copay accumulators, copay assistance does not count toward the deductible and out-of-pocket limits for patients, resulting in patients having to pay more for their medication, and delay access to other healthcare services. The AIDS Institute recently released a report showing that health plans on the individual market in 33 states and the District of Columbia have widespread use of copay accumulators.

“Now is not the time to allow insurance companies and pharmacy benefit managers to make it harder for people to get the medications they need to stay healthy. The COVID-19 pandemic is already increasing financial stress for millions; people living with and at risk of HIV, hepatitis and other chronic conditions cannot face additional cost burdens for accessing their medications,” says Rachel Klein, Deputy Director of The AIDS Institute. “This legislation is extremely important to ensure that patients who are most vulnerable to COVID-19 are not put at even greater risk to their health or their financial security.”

“We thank Rep. McEachin and Davis for their continued leadership on this issue. They continue to be a strong voice for patients living with chronic conditions in Congress, and we encourage other Members of Congress to sign on as cosponsors of this legislation,” says Michael Ruppal, Executive Director of The AIDS Institute.
For more information about copay accumulators and their impact on the cost of medication for patients, visit http://www.theaidsinstitute.org/federal-policy/patient-access.

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The AIDS Institute is a national non-partisan, nonprofit organization that promotes action for social change through public policy, research, advocacy and education.

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