**State Legislative Co-Sponsor Memos Of Interest to Rheumatology**

**January 2023**

***PA House of Representatives***

* ***Addressing Healthcare Worker Shortages by Expanding PA-TIP Program (non-MD clinicians)***

***Link to Co-Sponsor Memo:*** [*https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/Legis/CSM/showMemoPublic.cfm?Chamber=H&SPick=20230&cosponId=39572*](https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/Legis/CSM/showMemoPublic.cfm?Chamber=H&SPick=20230&cosponId=395723)

* ***PBM Transparency: former House Bill 2394 of 2021-2022 session***

***Link to Co-Sponsor Memo:*** [*https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/Legis/CSM/showMemoPublic.cfm?Chamber=H&SPick=20230&cosponId=38683*](https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/Legis/CSM/showMemoPublic.cfm?Chamber=H&SPick=20230&cosponId=38683)

* ***Staff to Patient Dialysis Ratios: proposing 1 caregiver per 4 patients***

***Link to Co-Sponsor Memo:*** [*https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/Legis/CSM/showMemoPublic.cfm?chamber=H&SPick=20230&cosponId=39121*](https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/Legis/CSM/showMemoPublic.cfm?chamber=H&SPick=20230&cosponId=39121)

* ***Patient Drug Shortage Reporting: proposing requiring drug manufacturers to report drug shortages***

***Link to Co-Sponsor Memo:*** [*https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/Legis/CSM/showMemoPublic.cfm?Chamber=H&SPick=20230&cosponId=39177*](https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/Legis/CSM/showMemoPublic.cfm?Chamber=H&SPick=20230&cosponId=39177)

* ***Barring Non-Compete Agreements in Healthcare Employment: PAMED Priority***

***Link to Co-Sponsor Memo:*** [*https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/Legis/CSM/showMemoPublic.cfm?Chamber=H&SPick=20230&cosponId=38812*](https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/Legis/CSM/showMemoPublic.cfm?Chamber=H&SPick=20230&cosponId=38812)

* ***Medical Liability Venue: PAMED Priority***

***Link to Co-Sponsor Memo***: [*https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/Legis/CSM/showMemoPublic.cfm?Chamber=H&SPick=20230&cosponId=39291*](https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/Legis/CSM/showMemoPublic.cfm?Chamber=H&SPick=20230&cosponId=39291)

* ***Ensuring Telemedicine Access for all Pennsylvanians: former House Bill 642 of 2021-2022 session***

***Link to Co-Sponsor Memo:***

[*https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/Legis/CSM/showMemoPublic.cfm?Chamber=H&SPick=20230&cosponId=39468*](https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/Legis/CSM/showMemoPublic.cfm?Chamber=H&SPick=20230&cosponId=38683)

* ***Healthcare Practitioner Credentialing Act: PAMED Priority- formerly House Bill 2613 of 2021-2022 session***

***Link to Co-Sponsor Memo:***

[*https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/Legis/CSM/showMemoPublic.cfm?Chamber=H&SPick=20230&cosponId=39474*](https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/Legis/CSM/showMemoPublic.cfm?Chamber=H&SPick=20230&cosponId=38683)

* ***Pennsylvania Medical Debt Repayment Program: Sponsor- Arvind Venkat, MD (ER Doc)***

***Link to Co-Sponsor Memo:***

[*https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/Legis/CSM/showMemoPublic.cfm?Chamber=H&SPick=20230&cosponId=39418*](https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/Legis/CSM/showMemoPublic.cfm?Chamber=H&SPick=20230&cosponId=38683)

* ***Office of Healthcare Consumer Advocate***

***Link to Co-Sponsor Memo:***[*https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/Legis/CSM/showMemoPublic.cfm?Chamber=H&SPick=20230&cosponId=39436*](https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/Legis/CSM/showMemoPublic.cfm?Chamber=H&SPick=20230&cosponId=38683)

* ***Protecting Patients- Informed Consent***

***Link to Co-Sponsor Memo:***

[*https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/Legis/CSM/showMemoPublic.cfm?Chamber=H&SPick=20230&cosponId=39680*](https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/Legis/CSM/showMemoPublic.cfm?Chamber=H&SPick=20230&cosponId=38683)

* ***Barring Non-Compete Agreements in Health Care Employments: PAMED Priority***

***Link to Co-Sponsor Memo:*** [*https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/Legis/CSM/showMemoPublic.cfm?Chamber=H&SPick=20230&cosponId=39580*](https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/Legis/CSM/showMemoPublic.cfm?Chamber=H&SPick=20230&cosponId=38683)

***Senate of Pennsylvania***

* ***Co-Payment Accumulator: former Senate Bill 196 of 2021-2022: PRS Priority***

Co-Sponsor Memo: Senator Judy Ward and Senator Maria Collett

As Senate Co-Chairs of the Pennsylvania Rare Disease Caucus, we plan to reintroduce Senate Bill 196 of last session. This legislation requires insurers or pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs) to count any amounts paid by the enrollee or paid on behalf of the enrollee by another party (i.e., drug manufacturer) when calculating an enrollee's overall contribution to the plan’s deductible or out-of-pocket limit.

In an effort to help individuals with a  rare and chronic illness afford special prescription medications to manage their health condition, drug manufacturers have offered co-pay assistance programs that alleviate a person’s out-of-pocket obligation. Individuals rely on co-pay coupons or discounts provided by manufacturers, which cover a significant amount of their deductible and coinsurance. Such copay coupons or discounts for chronic diseases (i.e., primary immunodeficiency diseases (PI), cancer, kidney disease, multiple sclerosis, HIV, rheumatoid arthritis) represent a lifeline by making medications more affordable for individuals and increases access to prescribed treatments.

Unfortunately, many health insurers and PBMs have implemented a practice commonly known as “copay accumulator programs,” which effectively prevents a drug manufacturer’s payments from counting toward an enrollee’s deductible, causing many to reach a “cost cliff” mid-year after using the entire amount of the copay card or coupon. Enrollees are then forced to choose between paying their full deductible and accessing their treatment or paying for food and rent. Copay accumulator programs shift the cost onto the enrollee while only benefiting the health insurers or PBM’s.

Unexpected costs imposed by copay accumulators can cause patients to delay treatment or forgo medication. According to the National Organization for Rare Disorders, “The evidence against copay accumulators is clear: numerous studies have demonstrated that substantial increases in prescription drug out-of-pocket costs leads to patients abandoning treatment and suffering worse health outcomes. Rare disease therapies tend to cost more than other classes of drugs because of their smaller patient populations. Therefore, the harmful effect of copay accumulators, regardless of the intent, will disproportionately impact rare disease patients and their families.”

This legislation seeks to end the discriminatory practice of copay accumulator programs being implemented by health insurers and PBMs. It requires them to count discounts enrollees get through drug payment assistance programs as paying off their out-of-pocket obligations. Fourteen states have already enacted similar legislation allowing drug discounts to count towards an enrollee’s deductibles and out-of-pocket limits.

***Link to Co-Sponsor Memo***: [*https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/Legis/CSM/showMemoPublic.cfm?Chamber=S&SPick=20230&cosponId=38954*](https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/Legis/CSM/showMemoPublic.cfm?Chamber=S&SPick=20230&cosponId=38954)

* ***Insurer Credentialing: PAMED Priority***

***Link to Co-Sponsor Memo:***

[*https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/Legis/CSM/showMemoPublic.cfm?Chamber=H&SPick=20230&cosponId=39733*](https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/Legis/CSM/showMemoPublic.cfm?Chamber=H&SPick=20230&cosponId=39733)

* ***Prescribing Opioids to Patients- Amendments: formerly Senate 169 of 2021-2022***

***Link to Co-Sponsor Memo:***

[*https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/Legis/CSM/showMemoPublic.cfm?Chamber=H&SPick=20230&cosponId=39580*](https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/Legis/CSM/showMemoPublic.cfm?Chamber=H&SPick=20230&cosponId=38683)

**NOTE: As of February 10, 2023, there are no proposed bills introduced in the House (since they have not been in session). Proposed Senate Bills will be on the tracking list.**

**Coalition Meetings**

***Pennsylvania Provider Coalition Meetings- next January 31, 2023***

 *(comprised of numerous medical coalition partners, including the Hospital and Health System Association of PA; PAMED; various medical specialty providers- our lobbyist represents us)*

***Pennsylvania Medical Society- Specialty Leadership Cabinet; House of Delegates; Other(?)***

***Make All Co-Pays Count Coalition (Co-Payment Accumulator)- TBD***

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**Federal Partners Advocacy Information**

***American College of Rheumatology:*** [*https://www.rheumatology.org/Advocacy/Legislative-Action-Center*](https://www.rheumatology.org/Advocacy/Legislative-Action-Center)

***Coalition of State Rheumatology Organizations (CSRO):*** [*https://csro.info/non\_cms\_pages/advocacy-campaigns.php*](https://csro.info/non_cms_pages/advocacy-campaigns.php)

**Federal Partners Advocacy Opportunities**

***CSRO National Town Hall: January 25, 2023, 7 PM:*** *2023 marks 20 years of advocacy for CSRO! Join us virtually for a National Town Hall to learn updates on our advocacy work and share about issues impacting you or your practice.*

*To register:* [*https://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/eventReg?oeidk=a07ejjajxf20eb09ea8&oseq=&c=&ch=*](https://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/eventReg?oeidk=a07ejjajxf20eb09ea8&oseq=&c=&ch=)

***CSRO Webinar: Advocacy Insider- Part 2 Webinar: February 8, 2023, 7:30 PM:*** *Learn how to make it happen!*

*To register:* [*https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\_kwinke9ZTAy82LFmK35Acw*](https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_kwinke9ZTAy82LFmK35Acw)

***CSRO Fellows Conference: March 10-11, 2023****: Help rheumatology fellows as they prepare for their future roles as physicians by encouraging them to attend CSRO's 2023 Fellows Conference – an annual event curated by rheumatologists specifically for rheumatology fellows. Will be held in San Francisco, California*

*To register:* [*https://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/eventReg?oeidk=a07ejepxzbv0652e0e9&oseq=&c=&ch=*](https://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/eventReg?oeidk=a07ejepxzbv0652e0e9&oseq=&c=&ch=)

***CSRO Advocacy Conference: August 25-27, 2023, Austin, Texas****: Details to be Announced*

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