
A Barrier to Care: Patient Out-of-Pocket Costs for Prescription Medications

Thanks to innovative new treatments, many diseases that were once fatal are now being treated as manageable chronic conditions and, for other diseases, new treatments have greatly increased average life expectancy. But today, under many health insurance plans, patients living with serious and life-threatening diseases must pay thousands of dollars in out-of-pocket costs to access the treatments their health care providers have prescribed. This is true for medications used to treat cancer, HIV/AIDS, arthritis, multiple sclerosis and other debilitating and life-threatening diseases. When cost-sharing becomes a barrier to access, patients find themselves facing difficult decisions about whether to take medically-necessary treatments or to risk the family's financial stability. As members of the patient and provider community throughout the state, we strongly support A2337, sponsored by Assemblyman Dan Benson in an effort to bring relief to patients struggling to overcome this access barrier. This coalition would urge the New Jersey Legislature to do the same and support limits on out-of-pocket costs for medications, so that all patients have affordable access to care.

