35 Patient Organizations Celebrate Rule to Protect Patients from Short-Term Health Plans

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On behalf of patients with serious and chronic health concerns, our 35 groups welcome and celebrate the Biden Administration’s new rule that will better protect patients from short-term, limited-duration health plans, a risky form of low-quality health coverage.

In 2018, a federal rule change—strongly opposed by our organizations—allowed for the proliferation of short-term health plans. Since that time, our organizations have repeatedly warned lawmakers about the risks these plans bring both to individual patients and the larger health coverage market.

The new rule will ensure that short-term health plans are used as they were originally intended: as short-term, stop-gap coverage while consumers are between other plans.

Marketed as an alternative to traditional health insurance, short-term plans are exempt from many important consumer protections. They often do not cover essential care, like prescription drugs or mental health services, and allow insurers to penalize consumers with pre-existing conditions and charge women more for their coverage. Further, these plans can utilize annual and lifetime coverage limits—leaving patients responsible for extraordinary costs. Due to deceptive marketing practices, consumers
often do not even know they’ve purchased a short-term plan until they attempt to use their coverage – only to discover its limitations. By then, it’s too late; they already face insurmountable medical bills.

As we celebrate 14 years of Affordable Care Act protections, it’s clear that patients now have access to far better and more affordable coverage and premiums. We expect the new rule to improve clarity for consumers and provide greater assurance about the quality of the health coverage they purchase.

We applaud the Biden Administration’s efforts and look forward to seeing the rule’s positive impact on patients.

ALS Association
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
American Diabetes Association
American Heart Association
American Kidney Fund
American Lung Association
Arthritis Foundation
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America
Cancer Support Community
CancerCare
Child Neurology Foundation
Chronic Disease Coalition
Crohn’s & Colitis Foundation
Cystic Fibrosis Foundation
Epilepsy Foundation
Foundation for Sarcoidosis Research
Hemophilia Federation of America
Immune Deficiency Foundation
Lupus Foundation of America
March of Dimes
Muscular Dystrophy Association
National Bleeding Disorders Foundation
National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship
National Eczema Association
National Health Council
National Kidney Foundation
National Multiple Sclerosis Society
National Organization for Rare Disorders
National Patient Advocate Foundation
National Psoriasis Foundation
NMDP (formerly National Marrow Donor Program)
Pulmonary Hypertension Association
Susan G. Komen
The AIDS Institute
The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society

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