



Dear Members of the New York Congressional Delegation,

During the final days of the Trump administration, changes were made to the Part D Payment Modernization Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation (CMMI) Model that will significantly alter Medicare prescription drug coverage. The revisions not only do nothing to lower out of pocket costs, but they also weaken important protections for drugs known as the six protected classes. These classes of medications include treatments for mental illness, cancer, organ transplant rejection, and HIV. As a result, our most vulnerable patients will see dangerous and potentially life-threatening reductions in access to medication.

Now, plans under the CMMI model would only be mandated to include only one drug in each of the protected classes. Millions of seniors and individuals with chronic illnesses rely on the six protected classes for essential access to affordable, specialized treatments. Eliminating existing protections not only threatens to raise out-of-pocket patient costs, but limits physicians' ability to address conditions that are already difficult to treat.

Patients are also facing potential hardship in other ways. As a result of ongoing litigation, the Department of Justice recently agreed to pause a rebate rule proposal that would protect discounts on prescription medication. The rebate rule would ensure that Part D beneficiaries, not middlemen, enjoy lower out-of-pocket costs. Protecting affordability is imperative when it comes to vulnerable patients and their life-saving medication.

If the Biden administration is serious about equity, they will oppose and withdraw the announced changes to the Part D Payment Modernization Model. Limiting coverage for critical drugs will lead to devastating health outcomes. The Biden administration needs to focus on implementing cost effective pro-patient policies and restore the implementation date of the rebate rule. The ongoing pandemic makes this all the more urgent. We ask you to stand with vulnerable patients by urging the Biden administration to take action on these critical issues.

Signed,

Carol LaFleur, Northeast Kidney Foundation  
John Wikiera, CNY HIV Care Network

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