



Date: January 19, 2018

To: New Mexico House and Senate members:

RE: SB – 11 and HB 42 Step Therapy

The New Mexico Medical Society is the professional association for 2,800 Medical and Osteopathic physicians practicing in New Mexico and 300 UNM Medical Students. The Society's governing body, the Council, met January 6, 2018 and voted unanimously to support SB-11 and HB-42 which establish guidelines relating to step therapy for prescription drug coverage.

Step therapy legislation is important to ensure patients receive the medications that, based on the medical judgement of their physician, best address the diagnosis and special needs of the individual patient. Managed care plans can require patients to follow a drug regimen with a specific sequence of drugs; this step therapy protocol is determined by their plan. This sequence of drugs may save money initially, but it supersedes the physician's medical judgment of best treatment for their patient, doesn't consider the unique clinical characteristics of the patient, and can result in higher expenditures and medical complications in the long run.

NMMS strongly believes this legislation balances the needs of the managed care plan and treating physician by allowing an expedited appeals process for the physician and the patient to request an exception to an insurer's step therapy protocol. NMMS agrees that cost-containment requirements are important, however such requirement may not be clinically appropriate care for all patient. SB-11 and HB42 provides this important balance that address cost containment while honoring medical judgement.

NMMS encourages the New Mexico Legislature to pass SB-11 and HB-42 for the continued health interest of the citizens of New Mexico. The Society believes the bills effectively address both cost control and the unique needs of each patient.

With best regards,

William Liakos, Jr. MD
NMMS President, 2017-2018