



### **The Threat of Step Therapy in Oregon:**

***A problematic and costly insurance process that restricts or prohibits a patient's access to recommended treatments. Senator Jeff Kruse has proposed a measure that will shield Oregon from this adverse practice.***

Dozens of Oregon patient provider groups, including Oregon Podiatric Medical Association, Arthritis Foundation, Cascade AIDS Project, Comprehensive Pain Consultants, The Oregon Rheumatology Alliance, American Diabetes Association, Columbia Pain Management, National Psoriasis Foundation, One in Four, American Association of Diabetes Educators, Coalition of Rheumatology Organizations, and Hemophilia Oregon, are championing new legislation, sponsored by Senator Jeff Kruse, which ensures that Oregon patients have timely access to necessary treatments without the unnecessary delays or impasses often caused by step therapy.

Step therapy, also known as 'fail first', is a tool that health insurers use to control spending on prescription drugs. This tool requires patients to 'fail first', often multiple times, on certain medications before they are able to receive the treatment originally prescribed by their physician. All too often, this delays access to optimal therapy, while potentially exacerbating a patient's condition.

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The relationship that a patient, especially those with chronic illnesses, has with their doctor is vital. [SB 526](#) focuses on ensuring that individualized treatment decisions remain between the doctor and the patient, while respecting the need to keep costs down. [SB 526](#) does not ban step therapy, nor is it a mandate that establishes new benefits. The proposed legislation establishes that step therapy utilization tools should be based on the most current clinical evidence possible, and that the protocols established are issued to providers and patients in a transparent manner. The measure additionally provides a set of exceptions to step therapy that are based on medical evidence and necessity. Furthermore, the bill requires insurers to respond to an exception request in a timely manner that recognizes both the ability of the insurer to do so, and the need for an expedited response.

The undersigned patient and provider organizations support this, and any, legislation that will exempt patients from a step therapy protocol under necessary circumstances. On behalf of patients with diverse chronic health conditions, we thank you for your time and consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

American Association of Diabetes Educators  
American Diabetes Association  
Arthritis Foundation  
Cascade AIDS Project  
Comprehensive Pain Consultants  
Coalition of State Rheumatology Organizations  
Columbia Pain Management  
Hemophilia Oregon  
National Psoriasis Foundation  
Dr. William Hinz  
Dr. Diman Lamichhane  
Dr. William Maier  
Dr. Shawn Macalester  
One in Four  
Oregon Podiatric Medical Association  
Oregon Rheumatology Alliance