

Colorado SB09-250: Coverage for Oral Chemot

SB09-250 requires health benefit plans that provide coverage for cancer chemotherapy treatment to provide coverage for orally administered anticancer medication on a basis no less favorable than that of coverage provided for intravenously administered or injected medications.

This bill does not make chemotherapy, either IV or oral, mandatory; it applies only to insurance policies that already provide coverage for cancer chemotherapy.

Placing this additional requirement in statute is unnecessary because oral chemotherapy drugs are already reviewed by a Pharmacy & Therapeutics Committee (which includes pharmacists as well as physicians) and are covered on insurance formularies. P&T committees continually review advances in oral chemotherapy drugs and make them available when the drug is shown to be comparatively effective and safe. For these reasons we believe there are appropriate measures in place for access to oral chemo making this bill unnecessary. This bill could cause harm because of the potential patient concerns of safety, efficacy and cost.

Colorado Prescription Coalition

The mission of the Colorado Prescription Coalition is to ensure patients have access to quality, affordable medications by increasing evidence-based prescribing and reducing conflicts of interest between prescribers and the pharmaceutical industry in Colorado. The Coalition is concerned about SB250 and its affect on patient safety, efficacy of the treatment and cost

The Colorado Prescription Coalition is comprised of physicians, medical students, advocacy groups and pharmacy who are committed to the mission of the Coalition

Patient Safety - Chemotherapy, whether injected or in pill form, is a toxic substance designed to kill cells. Direct medical oversight is essential for this treatment to ensure safety and efficacy of treatment. Using oral chemotherapy (rather than intravenous) is shifting treatment responsibility away from facilities and physician's offices into the patient's home, and away from nurses and doctors who monitor their patients' chemotherapy toxicity, dosage, frequency, and side effects.

Efficacy of Treatment - Oral chemotherapy drugs are not safer or more convenient. They have no less significant side effects than injected chemotherapy, depending on the patient and the type of cancer being treated. Based on the literature, some oral anticancer drugs may have acceptable efficacy under controlled study conditions, but some are clearly inferior when compared to injectables.

Cost - This bill will drive significant costs to consumers with no significant added benefit in health outcomes. One carrier estimates this could raise premiums \$57 per member per month. Another carrier found it too expensive to predict, possibly costing 65 times as much.

Please do not support SB09-250!