



2024 State Advocacy Issues

Co-Pay Accumulators: “Co-pay accumulators” and “co-pay maximizers” are forms of payer-imposed utilization management policies. With a co-pay accumulator or co-pay maximizer program in place, a manufacturer’s co-pay assistance no longer applies toward a patient’s co-pay or out-of-pocket maximum, resulting in patients’ out-of-pocket costs increasing.

[ASCO Co-Pay Accumulator Policy Brief](#)

Drug Donation Programs: As patients struggle with high out-of-pocket drug costs, some states have passed laws creating repository programs for patients to dispose of high-cost drugs for re-use. Any drug repository program should have safeguards, including marking donated drugs and limiting the scope to oral medication.

[ASCO Position Statement on Drug Repository Programs](#)

Drug Pricing: To address the high cost of prescription drugs, some states have created Prescription Drug Affordability Boards that can set upper payment limits for drugs. The establishment of an upper payment limit for a physician-administered drug may have unintended adverse consequences for patients with cancer and the physicians who treat them.

[ASCO Position Statement on Addressing the Affordability of Cancer Drugs](#)

Fertility Preservation Coverage: ASCO supports efforts to provide coverage of fertility preservation options for people with cancer or anticipating cancer treatment. ASCO has long advocated inclusion of fertility preservation as a component of patient education and informed consent before cancer therapy including discussing options with health care providers as early as possible.

[Fertility Preservation and Cancer: Policy Brief](#)

Medicaid Expansion/Waivers: ASCO strongly supports Medicaid expansion and will work to support it in the 9 states that have not yet done so and preserve the coverage gains in the states that have already expanded. Some states have sought approval from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to implement programmatic changes in their Medicaid programs that would condition eligibility, continued coverage, cost-sharing and other benefits on employment status. ASCO does not support waiver policies that could restrict or otherwise hinder access to Medicaid for individuals with a cancer diagnosis, or for those who are at increased cancer risk.

[Medicaid and Cancer Care Access: Policy Brief](#)

Pharmacy Benefit Managers: ASCO members have voiced serious concerns about the negative impact Pharmacy Benefit Managers (PBMs) can have on patient care. ASCO is concerned that certain PBM practices are interfering with the doctor-patient relationship and lowering the quality of care.

[Pharmacy Benefit Managers \(PBMs\): Policy Brief](#)

Prior Authorization: Prior authorization requires patients or prescribers to secure approval in advance of dispensing or administration as a condition of payment or insurance coverage of the prescribed

medication. The prior authorization process can be long and complex and place heavy administrative burden on prescribers, drawing time away from patient care. ASCO supports efforts to streamline prior authorization policies to avoid unnecessary barriers, delays in care, and other administrative burdens.

[ASCO Position Statement: Prior Authorization](#)

[Gold Carding: Policy Brief](#)

Step Therapy: Step therapy is a utilization management approach that requires patients to use the payer's preferred drug before the payer will cover another drug that may be preferred by the patient and treating physician. Step therapy policies are generally inappropriate in oncology due to the individualized nature of modern cancer treatment and the general lack of interchangeable options.

[ASCO Position Statement: Utilization Management](#)

White Bagging and Brown Bagging: Under a mandatory white bagging policy, insurers require physicians to obtain drugs purchased and handled by payer-owned or affiliated pharmacies, while under a brown bagging policy payers require the drug to be shipped from a pharmacy directly to the patient to bring to the provider's office for administration. Both policies can result in additional administrative burdens, delays in treatment for patients, and waste due to unused drug portions. ASCO supports efforts to prohibit brown bagging and payer-mandated white bagging.

[ASCO Position Statement: White Bagging](#)

[ASCO Position Statement: Brown Bagging](#)

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