



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT: Jen Johns – jjohns@amcno.org / 216-532-4505

AMCNO Comments on Dangerous Testimony by Insurance Industry

CLEVELAND, OH – The Academy of Medicine of Cleveland & Northern Ohio (AMCNO) would like to express its concern with testimony given today before the Ohio House Insurance Committee on HB 130, Gold Card legislation on the prior authorization process. Specifically, witness Keith Lake of America’s Health Insurance Plans (AHIP), suggested that health plans are more equipped to make decisions about a patient’s health than the patient’s personal physician.

The AMCNO strongly condemns this rhetoric. No one is more equipped to make health decisions, in partnership with a patient, than a trained board-certified physician.

Beyond being an extreme administrative burden on providers, prior authorization is simply no more than a time-delay tactic by the insurance companies to delay payments to keep their stakeholders happy. Most prior authorizations are approved on appeal, meaning the significant time spent by providers in the appeal process is unnecessary and time that could be better spent on direct patient care.

Patients also suffer the consequences of prior authorizations by having delays in receiving necessary tests, treatment, and/or medication. One Ohio patient shared online that her sister “broke her ankles and the insurance company has denied every request her doctor has made for every test. She is now unable to walk.”¹ This experience is not unique considering that **94% of physicians reported care delays associated with prior authorization.**²

When patients are suffering from life-threatening illnesses or debilitating health conditions, physicians need to be able to deliver care that is both evidenced-based and appropriate — which they are uniquely trained and educated to do — without being stalled by the insurance company whose premier motive is profit.

We believe that patient care and physicians’ provision of such should not be impeded by the red tape of prior authorizations. HB 130 is an important first step in protecting our physicians from unnecessary strain by rewarding physicians who are good actors, keeping our exceptional workforce of healthcare workers in Ohio, and recruiting more physicians to our great state. Without this bill’s passage, physicians may be incentivized to move to states that have already passed similar legislation including Texas, West Virginia, Louisiana, and Michigan.

¹ Patients and Physicians Speak Out. 2023. American Medical Association. <https://fixpriorauth.org/stories>.

² AMA Prior Authorization (PA) Physician Survey. 2022. American Medical Association. <https://www.ama-assn.org/system/files/prior-authorization-survey.pdf>

ABOUT AMCNO

The Academy of Medicine of Cleveland & Northern Ohio (AMCNO) is a nonprofit 501(c)6 professional organization of over 6,700 physicians and medical students with the mission of supporting physicians in being strong advocates for all patients and promoting the practice of the highest quality of medicine. Founded in 1824, AMCNO has a long history of physician advocacy as the oldest professional organization in Ohio.

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