



Alexandria, VA., May 29, 2024 – AMCP (Academy of Managed Care Pharmacy) today expressed concerns about the Healthcare Protection Act ([HB 5395](#)), which the Illinois General Assembly passed on May 25. Initially proposed by Gov. JB Pritzker, HB 5395 severely restricts managed care pharmacists from effectively managing prescription drug benefits for millions of Illinoisans covered under the state’s Medicaid program, state employee group insurance, and fully insured commercial plans.

The Healthcare Protection Act bans step therapy protocols, which help control healthcare costs by requiring patients to try more cost-effective treatments before a health plan covers the originally prescribed treatment. The bill also imposes significant requirements on plans’ utilization review programs, including setting a 90% pass rate for inter-rater reliability testing and requiring plans to provide education on review criteria for in-network providers and plan enrollees at no cost. Finally, the bill grants the Illinois Department of Insurance the authority to review premium rate changes for large-group health plans.

These proposals are intended to protect patients but come at a high cost, potentially directing patients to more expensive brand-name drugs without additional clinical benefit. [According to the governor’s office](#), these provisions would cost the state \$50 million annually due to higher Medicaid and state employee health benefits spending. These provisions would also burden small businesses and their employees, who would face higher out-of-pocket costs in the fully insured commercial market. Finally, patients may face reduced access to vital treatments if plans are forced to control rising costs by removing certain products from their formularies.

AMCP strongly [supports](#) utilization management’s role in providing quality, cost-effective prescription drug benefits. Utilization management’s fundamental goal is to promote the appropriate and cost-effective use of medications and optimize patient outcomes. Restrictions on utilization management tools, including prior authorization and step therapy, prevent managed care pharmacists and other health professionals from considering the range of clinical, safety, and pharmacoeconomic factors used in effective drug benefit strategies and programs. Rather than addressing prescription drug affordability, this bill prevents managed care pharmacists from using the few levers at their disposal to reduce healthcare spending and provide patients with access to safe, affordable medications.

AMCP supports efforts to promote transparency and establish reasonable prior authorization and step therapy program exclusion criteria requirements. However, HB 5395 severely limits health plans across Illinois from implementing important safeguards that promote patient safety and reduce health care spending. AMCP is disappointed by this bill but remains committed to working together to advance policies that balance transparency and accessibility for patients and their providers with flexibility for managed care pharmacists to design benefits that promote patient safety and reduce healthcare spending.

About AMCP

AMCP is the professional association leading the way to help patients get the medications they need at a cost they can afford. AMCP's diverse membership of pharmacists, physicians, nurses, biopharmaceutical professionals, and other stakeholders leverage their specialized expertise in clinical evidence and economics to optimize medication benefit design and population health management and help patients access cost-effective and safe medications and other drug therapies. AMCP members improve the lives of nearly 300 million Americans served by private and public health plans, pharmacy benefit management firms, and emerging care models. Visit www.amcp.org.

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