

White Paper Exposes Delay, Waste, and Cancer Treatment Obstacles Imposed on Patients by Pharmacy Benefit Managers

Compilation of True Patient-PBM Stories Released and Discussed at 2017 Community Oncology Conference

WASHINGTON, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, UNITED STATES, April 27, 2017 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A new white paper released today by the Community Oncology Alliance (COA) and the Community Oncology Pharmacy Association (COPA) exposes the negative impact pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs) have on the care cancer patients receive.

Compiling real stories of cancer patients and physicians, the white paper "Delay, Waste, and Cancer Treatment Obstacles: The Real-Life Patient Impact of Pharmacy Benefit Managers (PBM)" was released today at the opening of the 2017 Community Oncology Conference.

Presenting true patient stories collected from community oncology practices over the last year, the

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Ted Okon, executive director, COA

white paper details common PBM practices that have a negative impact on cancer patient care. The serious, sometimes dangerous, stories told in the paper include the delay of treatment for as much as six weeks, unaccountable PBM bureaucracies, unethical business practices, and incredible waste.

- [Read the full report](#) Delay, Waste, and Cancer Treatment Obstacles: The Real-Life Patient Impact of Pharmacy Benefit Managers (PBM).

“As new drugs become available and treatment options

improve, cancer patients can have better outcomes than ever before,” said Joshua Cox, PharmD, director of pharmacy, Dayton Physicians Network, and the Community Oncology Pharmacy Association (COPA) co-chair. “PBMs are presenting obstacles to care, often life-saving care, that can halt and even reverse that trend. For many patients to delay treatment can be the same as denying treatment.”



The image shows the cover of a white paper titled "Delay, Waste, and Cancer Treatment Obstacles: The Real-Life Patient Impact of Pharmacy Benefit Managers". The cover is white with a blue header and footer. The title is in a large, bold, black font. Below the title, there is a paragraph of text. The Community Oncology Alliance (COA) logo is in the top right corner, and the text "Over 15 Years of Making a Difference in Cancer Care" is below it. The date "April 2017" is in the top right corner.

April 2017

Delay, Waste, and Cancer Treatment Obstacles:

The Real-Life Patient Impact of Pharmacy Benefit Managers

There is growing awareness of the problems and pitfalls with Pharmacy Benefit Managers (PBMs) in the United States health care system. Contracted by insurance carriers to negotiate on their behalf with pharmaceutical companies, these 'middle men' corporations have quietly become an unavoidable part of our nation's health care system. Controlling at least 80 percent of drug benefits for over 260 million Americans, PBMs have the power to negotiate drug costs, what drugs will be included on plan formularies, and how those drugs are dispensed. Oftentimes, patients are required to receive drugs through PBM-owned specialty pharmacies.

However, while the role PBMs play in the U.S. health care system is complex and under scrutiny by policymakers and the public, with much of the debate focusing on economics, little discussion takes place of the impact PBMs have on patients.

This paper is the first in a series that will focus on the serious, sometimes dangerous, impact PBMs are having on cancer patients today. These are real patient stories but names have been changed to protect privacy.

The paper was presented during a special joint session at the 2017 Community Oncology Conference, "Pharmacy Benefit Managers: Profits Over Patients." The session's panel discussion featured the Honorable Earl L. "Buddy" Carter, U.S. House of Representatives (R-GA); Steven D'Amato, BS Pharm, Executive Director, New England Cancer Specialists; and Jonathan E. Levitt, Esq., Founding Partner, Frier Levitt. Dr. Cox moderated the session.

"PBMs effectively control access to treatment in our nation's health care system. For cancer patients waiting for or being denied desperately needed, life-saving drugs, PBMs have shown themselves to have a real, negative impact on care," said Ted Okon, executive director of COA. "No one can read these PBM horror stories and think the current stranglehold these corporations have on our health care system is a good thing. It is time to stop PBM abuses. Not one more patient should suffer because of these unaccountable corporations."

The 2017 Community Oncology Conference offers [three distinct agenda tracks](#) with content covering clinical, business, and patient advocacy topics. This year, the Conference also features an abbreviated pharmacy track which will cover a wide variety of in-office pharmacy roadblocks and legal issues, including specialty pharmacy accreditation, PBMs, oral medication management, and more. The conference is currently taking place April 27-28 in National Harbor, MD, right outside of Washington, DC.

Read the full report Delay, Waste, and Cancer Treatment Obstacles: The Real-Life Patient Impact of Pharmacy Benefit Managers (PBM) at <http://bit.ly/pbmstoriesv1>.

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About the Community Oncology Alliance: The Community Oncology Alliance (COA) is a non-profit organization dedicated solely to preserving and protecting access to community cancer care, where the majority of Americans with cancer are treated. COA leads community cancer clinics in navigating an increasingly challenging environment to provide efficiencies, patient advocacy, and proactive solutions to Congress and policy makers. To learn more about COA visit www.CommunityOncology.org.

About the Community Oncology Pharmacy Association: The Community Oncology Pharmacy Association (COPA) was formed in response to the increasing number of community cancer clinics dispensing oral cancer drugs and ancillary therapies. COPA is a non-profit entity, under the direction of COA, that has established national quality standards in partnership with ACHC and will be providing information, education, and resources, enhancing information exchange, and helping advocate for the patient-centric model of integrated, high-quality cancer care. To learn more about COPA visit www.COAPharmacy.org.

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