

COA Statement on White House Executive Orders to Lower Drug Prices

Trump Administration Executive Orders Present Ambitious Initiatives to Lower Drug Prices

WASHINGTON, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, UNITED STATES, July 24, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Statement from [Ted Okon](#), Executive Director, Community Oncology Alliance (COA):

The Community Oncology Alliance (COA) supports aspects of the Trump Administration's efforts announced today to lower drug prices and the overall costs of health care for all Americans, while reserving judgement on other parts of the President's plan.

COA is extremely supportive of today's Executive Order to ensure Medicare

beneficiaries receive the rebates negotiated by pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs). As President Trump noted in his remarks, PBMs are secretive corporate middlemen who provide little to no true value to patient health, yet significantly increase patient drug costs and fuel drug prices.

The nation's secretive and complex PBM drug rebate system has caused enormous pain and confusion among patients with cancer and other serious diseases. The Executive Order will lower drug prices by finally ensuring that patients receive the benefit of negotiated drug discounts, rather than PBMs and their affiliated corporate plan sponsors pocketing the profits from rebates. For too long, America's shameful drug rebate system has served to drive drug list prices higher and higher, only benefitting PBM middlemen while fueling out-of-pocket drug costs for patients.

COA hopes that future action will be taken by the White House and Congress to address the [misery and abuses](#) inflicted on patients by PBM middlemen. COA has documented countless real-life horror stories from practices and physicians about patients battling cancer who have



Community Oncology Alliance Logo

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suffered at the hands of PBMs due to delayed coverage decisions, denial of needed treatments, impenetrable bureaucracies, and failure to receive medications in a timely manner.

COA believes that today’s Executive Order passing discounts on insulin directly to patients is an important first step in fixing what is a completely broken 340B Drug Pricing Program. What was once a program intended to help patients in need receive drug cost assistance from a small number of safety net providers has grossly mutated

into one where discounts and profits benefit large, corporate hospitals. Worse yet, PBMs have now gotten into the 340B game as contract pharmacies, realizing that 340B allows them to virtually print money off the backs of patients in need.

COA calls upon the Administration and Congress to build on this order to ensure that 340B program discounts benefit patients in need, not wealthy corporate health systems and PBMs. We have long documented [concerns about the 340B program](#) and patients who are turned away for treatment or are victims of aggressive debt collection tactics by 340B hospitals. This would be a particularly meaningful public policy change as millions of Americans are out of work, uninsured, or underinsured due to the COVID-19 (novel coronavirus) pandemic.

COA looks forward to hearing the solutions that will emerge from the President’s meetings with pharmaceutical manufacturers next week and the details of any proposed regulations or demonstrations that are released by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Whatever solutions are proposed, it is imperative that we do not harm patients’ access to the latest, innovative cancer treatments or harm the cancer care providers that treat them. This is particularly true as community oncology practices have bravely managed to continue providing uninterrupted cancer care to patients during this unprecedented global pandemic.

COA is completely committed to comprehensive oncology payment reform, including addressing drug payment, sites of service, and other related cost drivers. We have worked closely with the Congress and the Administration to propose innovative and meaningful solutions to lower the cost of cancer drugs with evidenced-based medicine while controlling patient costs. As the frontline providers of care for the majority of Americans battling cancer, independent community oncologists are uniquely positioned to give insight into the impact of federal policymaking on patients, providers, and the overall health care system, and we look forward to serving as a resource to the White House, Congress, and Federal agencies in the coming months.

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About the Community Oncology Alliance: The majority of Americans battling cancer receive treatment in the community oncology setting. Keeping patients close to their homes, families, and support networks lessens the impact of this devastating disease. Community oncology practices do this while delivering high-quality, cutting-edge cancer care at a fraction of the cost of the hospital setting. The Community Oncology Alliance (COA) advocates for community oncology and smart public policy that ensures the community cancer care system remains healthy and able to provide all Americans with access to local, quality, affordable cancer care. Learn more at www.CommunityOncology.org.

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