

Community Oncology Alliance Joins Amicus Brief Advocating for State Regulation of Pharmacy Benefit Managers

Coalition of Patient Advocacy Groups File Brief Supporting North Dakota Regulation of Abusive Practices by PBM Industry

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, July 2, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Yesterday, the Community Oncology Alliance (COA) joined a coalition of patient advocacy groups in filing an amicus curiae brief supporting North Dakota's efforts to regulate abusive practices by pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs).



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Kashyap Patel, MD, president of COA

COA joined the Alliance for Transparent and Affordable Prescriptions and American Pharmacies in filing the amicus curiae brief in *Pharmaceutical Care Management Association (PCMA) vs. Wehbi*, a challenge to a North Dakota law designed to regulate abusive practices by the PBM industry, currently being argued in the 8th Circuit

Court of Appeals. The brief argues that states need the ability to address PBM abuses and drug pricing games, especially those that are hurting patients with cancer and other serious diseases.

• [Click here to read the amicus brief in PCMA vs. Wehbi.](#)

This is the latest high-profile court case against PBMs following last year's unanimous [Supreme Court decision \(Rutledge vs. PCMA\)](#) finding that the Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA) did not preclude a state's ability to regulate pharmacy benefit managers. COA and several leading community oncology practices also filed a brief in support of the Arkansas case.

"Oncologists remain troubled by the negative impact PBMs have on patient care and the role they play in driving up costs," said Kashyap Patel, MD, president of COA and a practicing medical oncologist at Carolina Blood and Cancer Care Associates in Rock Hill, South Carolina. "PBMs are directly responsible for the loss of patient access to affordable, potentially life-saving medications for cancer and other serious diseases. COA is proud to share our voice and support

the effort in North Dakota and nationwide to stop PBM abuses.”

Community oncology practices and pharmacies have long reported on the [real-life patient horror stories](#) at the hands of PBMs and the suffering they cause. PBMs regularly delay delivery of critical cancer drugs, deny coverage, and argue with physicians and pharmacists over proper treatment, among other abuses. COA has also helped highlight patient PBM horror stories like those published by NBC News, the Fresno Bee, the Columbus Dispatch, and STAT News. Countless research has also been released highlighting the problem of pricing games and spread pricing, including a shocking report from the Florida Medicaid program.



COA remains active in warning policymakers that without significant state or federal action, PBM abuses will undermine our health care system and the incredible, lifesaving progress the United States has made in treating cancer and reducing mortality due to the disease.

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About the Community Oncology Alliance: COA is a non-profit organization dedicated to advocating for community oncology practices and, most importantly, the patients they serve. COA is the only organization dedicated solely to community oncology where the majority of Americans with cancer are treated. The mission of COA is to ensure that cancer patients receive quality, affordable, and accessible cancer care in their own communities. More than 1.5 million people in the United States are diagnosed with cancer each year and deaths from the disease have been steadily declining due to earlier detection, diagnosis, and treatment. Learn more at www.CommunityOncology.org. Follow COA on Twitter at www.twitter.com/oncologyCOA or on Facebook at www.facebook.com/CommunityOncologyAlliance.

Nicolas Ferreyros
Community Oncology Alliance (COA)

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