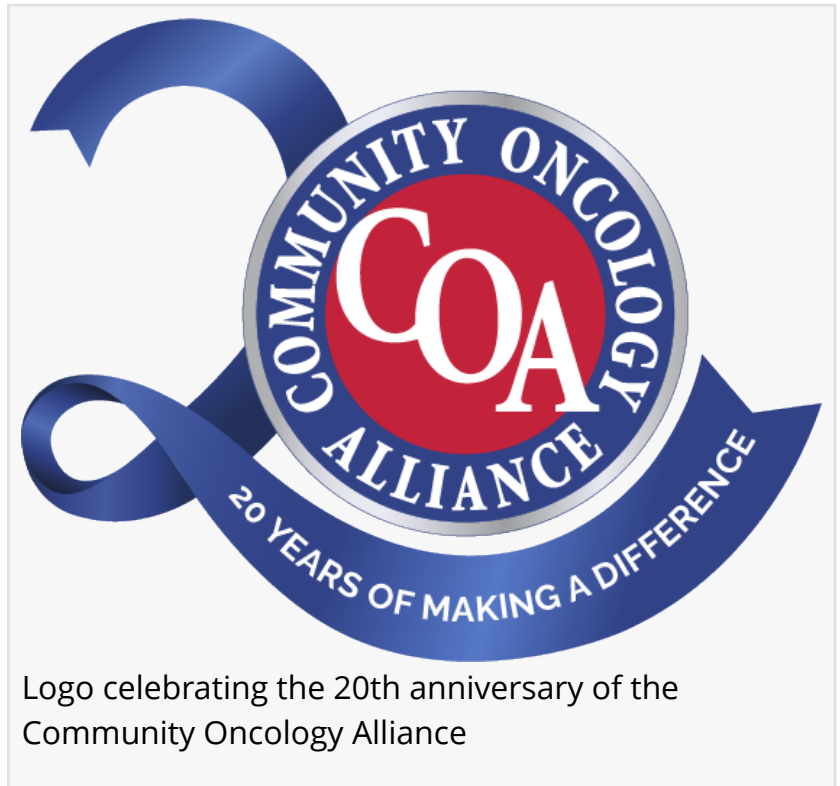


Community Oncology Alliance Submits Comments to Congressional RFI on Drug Shortages

Shortages Caused by Broken Financial System and Misguided Public Policies that Plague Generic, Sterile, Injectable Cancer Drugs, says COA

WASHINGTON, D.C., UNITED STATES, July 10, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Community Oncology Alliance (COA) has submitted formal comments to Congress on the ongoing cancer drug shortage crisis and solutions to finally address the financial disincentives and misguided public policies that are causing them. The comments are a response to a bicameral Request for Information (RFI) from the United States House Energy and Commerce Committee and United States Senate Finance Committee regarding the increase in drug shortages.



- [Read COA's full response to the Congressional drug shortage RFI.](#)

In the comments, COA notes that the current shortages are with sterile, injectable, low-cost generic drugs, not expensive brand products. Patient care across the country is being seriously impacted by the ongoing and unprecedented shortage of mainstay cancer treatments, including cisplatin, carboplatin, methotrexate, and Bacillus Calmette-Guerin. Because they are sterile injectables, they are more difficult and costly to make than pills and tablets, often requiring significant investment and maintenance of manufacturing facilities.

"The drugs we are facing shortages of today are some of the most basic, long-standing tools I have in my arsenal to treat patients with curable cancers," said Miriam Atkins, MD, FACP, president of COA. "Unfortunately, cancer drug shortages are nothing new in my lifetime and it is shameful that our elected officials have not taken serious action to address this national crisis."



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*Miriam Atkins, MD, president,
COA*

As COA notes in the RFI response, over the years the generic market has generated razor-thin margins for generic manufacturers while becoming highly commoditized and marked by significant consolidation. For most generic drugs, it is a race to the pricing bottom, resulting in these drugs becoming unprofitable, at best, to manufacturers. What little profit margins are realized are pushed even lower by seemingly well-intentioned government programs like the 340B Drug Pricing Program that layer on additional significant discounts and rebates. Together, the manufacturing complexity, low margins, and

extreme discounts collectively create disincentives that make generic drugs even more financially unsustainable and susceptible to supply shocks and shortages.

“Cancer patients and providers should be infuriated at the lack of meaningful solutions to addressing cancer drug shortages that plague our health care system. This is simply unacceptable,” said Ted Okon, executive director of COA. “The fact of the matter is that the generic injectable drug market is fundamentally broken, and Congress and the Administration need to address the financial disincentives and misguided public policies that have plagued it for too long.”

COA's comments build on testimony provided last month by COA's executive director Ted Okon before hearings of the United States House Committee on Ways and Means' Subcommittee on Health and Committee on Energy and Commerce's Subcommittee on Health, as well as his testimony on the exact same issue before Congress in 2011.

Read COA's full comment letter at <https://mycoa.communityoncology.org/education-publications/comment-letters/coa-response-to-congressional-rfi-on-drug-shortages>.

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About the Community Oncology Alliance: The Community Oncology Alliance (COA) is a non-profit organization dedicated to advocating for community oncology practices and, most importantly, the patients they serve. For more than 20 years, COA has been 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 patients with cancer receive quality, affordable, and accessible cancer care in their own communities. More than 5,000 people in the United States are diagnosed with cancer every day 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)
[email us here](#)

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