



WISCONSIN ACADEMY of FAMILY PHYSICIANS

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Wisconsin Academy of Family Physicians Commends Passage of Step Therapy Reform

MADISON - On Tuesday, June 18, the Wisconsin State Assembly passed Senate Bill 26, the Step Therapy Reform Bill. The legislation, authored by Senator Alberta Darling (R – River Hills) and Representative John Nygren (R – Marinette), allows physicians and patients to override step therapy protocols under certain conditions.

“Senate Bill 26 ensures physicians, rather than insurance companies, have the tools to determine the best course of treatment for a patient,” said Wisconsin Academy of Family Physicians President Dr. Lisa Dodson. “WAFP is grateful to Senator Darling and Representative Nygren for bringing this legislation forward. WAFP actively advocated for this bill throughout the legislative process. We are very pleased to see the legislature heard our stories and acted to address our patients’ needs.”

Step therapy is a tool commonly used by insurers to govern the order in which patients utilize certain therapies approved for a diagnosed condition. Step therapy processes are implemented for pharmaceutical therapies to treat a variety of diseases and chronic conditions, including Alzheimer’s, Cancer, Diabetes, HIV/AIDS and Mental Health. Under step therapy protocols, patients may be required to try one or more alternative prescription drugs chosen by their health plan before coverage is granted for the drug prescribed by that patient’s health care provider.

In some cases, step therapy protocols can negatively impact patients who need access to the pharmaceuticals their physicians prescribe. Senate Bill 26 maintains an insurer’s ability to set step therapy protocols while also providing physicians the ability to supersede those protocols when medically necessary and appropriate.

“Senate Bill 26 passed both houses of the legislature with overwhelming bipartisan support,” said Dr. Dodson. “WAFP hopes Governor Evers signs the bill in a timely manner so patients can gain access to the treatments they need.”

The WAFP is a statewide association of Family Medicine physicians striving to promote excellence within the health care field and working to improve the health of the people of Wisconsin through the advancement of the art and science of Family Medicine. With over 3,000 members, the WAFP is the single largest physician specialty group in Wisconsin. In addition to practicing physicians, the WAFP also supports education and research programs for medical students.

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