



May 14, 2015

The Honorable Fred Upton
Chairman
Committee on Energy and Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank Pallone
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Joe Pitts
Chairman
Subcommittee on Health
Committee on Energy and Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Gene Green
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Health
Committee on Energy and Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Upton and Pitts and Ranking Members Pallone and Green:

We, the undersigned organizations representing research and policy organizations, healthcare plan sponsors, and managed care pharmacists, strongly support provisions in the 21st Century Cures Act authorizing Medicare plans to implement programs to prevent prescription drug abuse under Medicare Parts C and D by establishing drug-management programs that require patients at risk of drug abuse to utilize designated pharmacies and prescribers to obtain controlled substances at risk for abuse.

These drug-management programs, which are also known as Patient Review and Restriction programs (PRRs), are a critical tool for addressing the nation's prescription drug abuse epidemic. A Centers for Disease Control and Prevention expert panel evaluation found that PRRs used in state Medicaid programs have reduced narcotic prescriptions, abuse, and visits to multiple doctors and emergency rooms, while also generating cost savings.¹ These drug management programs are used in state Medicaid as well as in commercial plans, but authorization is needed by Congress to permit the use of PRRs in Medicare. The provisions of the legislation would authorize the use of PRRs in Medicare, improving continuity of care by providing improved drug therapy management while simultaneously ensuring patients with legitimate medical needs continue to have access to effective pain control.

The inclusion of PRRs in 21st Century Cures, and other similar bipartisan proposals put forward in Congress and in the FY 2016 Budget request for the Department of Health and Human Services,

reflects the shared interest in advancing these measures as effective tools to decrease abuse of opioids and other controlled substances. We thank you for your work to advance this important public health policy and urge both chambers of Congress to act swiftly to pass legislation that authorizes these programs in Medicare to help address the Nation's ongoing prescription drug abuse epidemic. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Lindsey Berman at the Pew Charitable Trusts at lberman@pewtrusts.org or (202) 540-6958.

Sincerely,

The Pew Charitable Trusts
Alliance of Community Health Plans
Anthem, Inc.
CVS Health
Express Scripts

National Coalition on Health Care
Academy of Managed Care Pharmacy
Pharmaceutical Care Management Association
Prime Therapeutics LLC

ⁱ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. Patient review & restriction programs. Lessons learned from state Medicaid programs (2012). Available at http://www.cdc.gov/homeandrecreationalafety/pdf/PDO_patient_review_meeting-a.pdf