



Please pass comprehensive pharmacy benefit manager (PBM) reform this year that improves access to treatments that people need.

## **PBM policies have a direct impact on whether people with MS can access and afford their medications.**

- Despite having no direct relationship with individual patients, PBMs control:
  - What medications insurers cover,
  - The amount patients pay out-of-pocket,
  - Policies that can limit access, like step therapy and prior authorization, and
  - What pharmacy patients must use.
- The three largest PBMs manage about 80% of all prescriptions filled in the U.S. and have consolidated influence over the U.S. healthcare system.
- PBM negotiations are secret, and it often appears that decisions are driven by what's financially best for PBMs instead of what's in the best interests of patients. For example:
  - A PBM may require individuals to take a higher-priced medication because the PBM profits more.
  - PBMs receive rebates when they negotiate with drug companies, but it is unknown whether any of those savings lower patients' costs—or if they are kept by the PBM.
- Multiple Congressional committees have targeted PBM reform legislation, and it is a priority for Congressional leadership.

## **There is bipartisan and bicameral support for PBM reform policies that are budget-neutral or generate savings. Broad PBM reform is needed that will:**

- Bring transparency to PBM processes.
- Prohibit unfair and deceptive pricing models.
- Ensure patients are the recipients from savings in the system.
- Prohibit policies that limit access to necessary treatments or shift cost burden to the patient.

## **High Costs of MS therapies make them a prime target for PBMs and Insurers to Limit Access**

- The average cost of living with MS for an individual is \$88,487.
- Early and ongoing treatment with a MS disease-modifying therapy (DMT) is the best way to prevent disease progression, relapses, and worsening disability.
- More than 20 different DMTs can currently be used to treat relapsing forms of MS.
- People with MS, on average, pay \$65,612 more per year in medical costs than people who do not have MS. The largest percentage of this cost is the cost of an individual's DMT.
- In 2023, the average brand price for an DMT is \$97,492. Including generics, the average only falls to \$81,576.

## **What is multiple sclerosis (MS)?**

- MS is an unpredictable, often disabling disease of the central nervous system that disrupts the flow of information between the brain and body. Early treatment minimizes disease progression.
- Symptoms range from numbness and tingling to blindness and paralysis.
- The progress, severity, and specific symptoms of MS in any one person cannot yet be predicted.
- Nearly 1 million people in the United States live with MS.