

Safe Step Act Talking Points

Senate: Ask Senators to co-sponsor S 2546, the Safe Step Act

House: Ask House Representatives to co-sponsor HR 2279, the Safe Step Act

Background

Step therapy protocols are determined by insurance companies and require patients to fail first on an insurer-preferred medication before providing coverage for the physician-prescribed medication. Step therapy is a medical management tool used by health plans to control costs. When implemented inappropriately, step therapy can delay needed treatment, lead to worsened health outcomes, and exacerbate costs.

To address this issue, Senators Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), Doug Jones (R-AL), and Bill Cassidy (R-LA), and Representatives Brad Wenstrup (R-OH-2) and Raul Ruiz (D-CA-36) introduced S 2546/HR 2279 which would:

- Require health plans to implement a clear appeal process
- Establish a time frame by which insurers must respond to appeals
- Establish circumstances (exceptions) in which a patient can be exempt from step therapy when medically appropriate

S 2546/HR 2279 establishes the following exceptions when a patient would not have to go through step therapy protocols:

- The required drug is contraindicated or ineffective in treating the disease
- The treatment is expected to be ineffective based upon the known characteristics of the patient, including medical history
- The treatment would likely cause an adverse reaction or other physical harm to the patient
- The treatment is not in the best interest of the patient because it could decrease their ability to function or adhere to the treatment plan
- The patient is stable on their current therapy

Talking Points

- Please co-sponsor S 2546/HR 2279, the Safe Step Act. This bill would implement patient protections in step therapy
- ***[Tell your IBD story and why timely access is important to you]***
- Step therapy is when a patient is required to fail first on an insurer-preferred medication before the insurer will agree to cover the treatment selected by the patient and their physician
- Step therapy can delay treatment, and in the worse cases, lead to worsened health outcomes and higher expenses
- S 2546/HR 2279 would:
 - Require health plans to implement a clear appeal process
 - Establish a time frame that insurers must respond to appeals
 - Establish circumstances in which a patient can be exempt from step therapy when medically appropriate
- Will you co-sponsor the Safe Step Act?