

MedChi

The Maryland State Medical Society

1211 Cathedral Street
Baltimore, MD 21201-5516
410.539.0872
Fax: 410.547.0915

1.800.492.1056

www.medchi.org

TO: The Honorable Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk, Chair
Members, House Health and Government Operations Committee
The Honorable Ashanti Martinez

FROM: Danna L. Kauffman
Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
J. Steven Wise
Andrew G. Vetter
Christine K. Krone
410-244-7000

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RE: **SUPPORT** – House Bill 1368 – *Health Insurance Carriers and Pharmacy Benefits Managers – Clinician-Administered Drugs and Related Services*

The Maryland State Medical Society (MedChi), the largest physician organization in Maryland, **supports** House Bill 1368, which would prohibit mandatory “white bagging” and all “brown bagging” requirements from carriers and pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs) to allow patients to obtain clinician-administered drugs from their health care providers, thereby preserving timely and consistent delivery of high quality, patient-centered care.

Brown bagging and mandatory white bagging policies remove the physician’s ability to control the preparation of drugs. Under a mandatory white bagging policy, insurers require physicians to obtain drugs purchased and managed by payer-owned or affiliated pharmacies, while under a brown bagging policy payers require the drug to be shipped from a pharmacy directly to the patient to bring to the provider’s office for administration. Both policies require additional coordination with patients and physicians and could delay or disrupt treatment plans and decisions. Day-of treatment changes can lead to a delay in care if a physician must place a new order, requiring the patient to return on a later date to receive their treatment. This can result in significantly decreased chances of a successful clinical outcome for the patient as well as potential adverse effects on patient health, including toxic reactions.

When treatment plans are modified on the day-of treatment, brown bagging and mandatory white bagging policies can also lead to waste if an unused portion of a previously dispensed drug cannot be used for a different patient. For example, many anti-cancer drugs are highly toxic and require special handling when discarded. The burden of unnecessary waste related to white bagging and brown bagging falls to practices and hospitals, which must dispose of drugs according to state and federal requirements.

Through years of training and experience in their chosen specialty, physicians are well-informed on the medications that they prescribe to their patients and can advise their patients accordingly. Therefore, MedChi urges a favorable vote on House Bill 1368 to provide patients with the flexibility to obtain their medications at the venue that they believe will provide them with better care and quality outcomes, which will ultimately benefit the health care system at-large.