



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 Shane E. Pendergrass, Chair
Members, House Health and Government Operations Committee
The Honorable Karen Lewis Young

FROM: Danna L. Kauffman
Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
J. Steven Wise

DATE: January 20, 2021

RE: **SUPPORT** – House Bill 170 – *Cancer Drugs – Physician Dispensing and Coverage*

The Maryland State Medical Society (MedChi) and the Maryland/DC Society of Clinical Oncologists **support** House Bill 170. House Bill 170 authorizes a physician to dispense by mail or other commercial method a starter dosage of a cancer drug or device or an initial or refill prescription of a cancer drug. In addition, the bill requires that an insurer or pharmacy benefits manager allow a covered individual to obtain from a dispensing physician a covered specialty drug that is a cancer drug (oral oncology).

House Bill 170 seeks to streamline care for the patient and prescribing physician by allowing the patient to obtain cancer drugs from the prescribing physician rather than from a third party – the specialty pharmacy. Requiring these drugs to come through a specialty pharmacy adds another layer to the care paradigm. The patient’s physician develops and executes the treatment plan for the patient, including the prescribing of cancer drugs. As a result of this trusted relationship, patients come to their oncologist for further education and to have questions answered regarding their course of drug treatment rather than the specialty pharmacy, regardless of this being the role and responsibility of the specialty pharmacy. By allowing for the removal of the specialty pharmacy from the equation, the physician can ensure that the patient receives the prescribed drug in a timely manner without communication delays occurring between the specialty pharmacy and the patient, including the ability for the physician to expedite the adjusting of doses and to monitor for side effects. House Bill 170 does not negate the need for the physician to be part of the insurer’s pharmacy network nor does it circumvent utilization review policies and procedures. We urge a favorable vote.

For more information call:

Danna L. Kauffman
Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
J. Steven Wise
410-244-7000