



**Committee:** House Health and Government Operations Committee

**Bill number:** Senate Bill 515 - Health Insurance – Step Therapy or Fail–First Protocol – Revisions

**Hearing Date:** March 30, 2023

**Position:** Support

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The Maryland Affiliate of the American College of Nurse Midwives (ACNM) supports Senate Bill 515 - Health Insurance – Step Therapy or Fail–First Protocol – Revisions. The bill requires a carrier to establish a process for requesting an exception to a step therapy protocol, and exempts from step therapy protocols a prescription drug that is used to treat the insured or enrollee’s mental disorder or condition under certain conditions.

The current step therapy law in Maryland is not working as intended and needs to be updated in order to help patients get the care that they need. Step therapy forces patients to use lower cost or generic medications before they can access the medications that their doctor believes is right for them. This often leads to delays in treatment and can even result in patients having to take medications that is not effective. Unfortunately, the current law has not been successful in reducing costs and has generally negatively impacted patient care.

SB 515 would ensure that step therapy is only used when medically necessary and that patients have access to the medications they need in a timely manner. This legislation would also provide more flexibility for doctors to treat their patients as they deem appropriate, which is critical for providing quality care. Furthermore, it would also require health insurance companies to provide clear and accessible information about their step therapy policies.

We ask for a favorable report. If we can provide any further information, please contact Michael Paddy at [mpaddy@policypartners.net](mailto:mpaddy@policypartners.net).