



March 19, 2025

The Honorable Donald W. Longmuir
Chair, House Political Subdivisions
North Dakota Legislative Council
600 East Boulevard Avenue
Bismarck, ND 58505

The Honorable Clayton Fegley
Vice Chair, House Political Subdivisions
North Dakota Legislative Council
600 East Boulevard Avenue
Bismarck, ND 58505

RE: Support for S.B.2249

Dear Chair Longmuir and Vice Chair Fegley:

On behalf of the Derma Care Access Network (DCAN), I am writing in support of North Dakota S.B.2249, which would limit the use of step therapy by insurers and provide patients and providers a clear process for navigating step therapy. I ask that you support this bill, ensuring patients receive timely access to treatment.

The Derma Care Access Network is a coalition of more than two dozen advocacy organizations representing patients, health care providers, and other skin health stakeholders working to raise awareness and inform policies impacting patient-centered care.

According to the NIH, skin conditions affect as many as one in three Americans at any time. Common skin conditions include acne, contact dermatitis, alopecia, cancers, atopic dermatitis (also called eczema), and psoriasis.

Skin conditions are more than just a rash. Chronic skin disease can also affect one's mental health, impacting a patient's ability to work and participate in everyday activities. The physical, psychological, and social consequences affect patients, caregivers, and family members.

Step therapy is a utilization management scheme used by insurers to dictate a specific course of care, often to increase the insurers profits. Sometimes referred to as "fail first," step therapy protocols require patients to try and fail on one or more treatments before being able to access the medication originally prescribed by their health care provider. This leads to delays in accessing treatment, negative health outcomes, and increased burden on both patients and providers.

According to a 2019 study done by Xcenda, step therapy protocols resulted in 40 percent of patients abandoning treatment. Frustrated by their inability to access a treatment that promised relief, these patients lost hope and the benefits of having an optimal health outcome. No patient should have to reach this point because insurers will not support their needs. The harm to patients is clear.

S.B.2249 would establish a clear standard process for navigating step-therapy requests and exemptions, ensuring patients can receive timely access to their care without onerous step-therapy barriers.

On behalf of North Dakota patients living with skin conditions and the Derma Care Access Network, I ask that you support S.B.2249. This bill protects patients' treatment and health by ensuring they can access the medication prescribed by their clinician.

Sincerely,

Gabrielle Draper
Director of Advocacy and Policy
Derma Care Access Network
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CC: The Honorable Jayme Davis
The Honorable LaurieBeth Hager
The Honorable Patrick R. Hatlestad
The Honorable Matthew Heilman
The Honorable Dawson Holle
The Honorable Jim Jonas
The Honorable Lawrence R. Klemin
The Honorable Mike Motschenbacher
The Honorable Mitch Ostlie
The Honorable Nico Rios
The Honorable Nathan Toman
The Honorable Jonathan Warrey