



The Nation's Advocacy Voice for In-Office Infusion

3307 Northland Dr, Ste 160 ▪ Austin, TX 78731
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North Dakota Senate
Human Services Committee
600 East Boulevard Avenue
Bismarck, ND 58505

January 27, 2025

Re: Support for SB 2249

Dear Committee Members:

On behalf of the infusion providers we represent in your state, thank you for your service and commitment to the people of North Dakota. As a nonprofit trade association that provides a national voice for non-hospital, community-based infusion providers; we ask that you please support SB 2249.

The National Infusion Center Association (NICA) is a nonprofit organization formed to support non-hospital, community-based infusion centers caring for patients in need of infused and injectable medications. To improve access to medical benefit drugs that treat complex, rare, and chronic diseases, we work to ensure that patients can access these drugs in high-quality, non-hospital care settings. NICA supports policies that improve drug affordability for beneficiaries, increase price transparency, reduce disparities in quality of care and safety across care settings, and enable care delivery in the highest-quality, lowest-cost setting.

When dealing with complex diseases, conventional drugs are not always effective, and infusions are often the only hope for patients suffering from autoimmune diseases or other chronic illnesses. However, it can take several years for a patient to exhaust conventional treatments before starting a biologic or infusion. When patients are subjected to step therapy or "fail first" policies that require them to try and fail a medication before taking the medication their doctor prescribed, insurance companies create yet another hoop to jump through before patients can reach clinical stability.

Onerous step therapy protocols essentially allow insurers to practice medicine by dictating what medication a patient can take. Step therapy protocols, especially those that diverge from widely



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accepted clinical guidelines, can lead to prolonged under-management of debilitating conditions and unnecessary clinical risk. As I'm sure you know, it is more important than ever for patients to avoid preventable hospital visits, not only in terms of capacity but also in an effort to keep patients with pre-existing complex conditions away from potential exposure to other illnesses.

The passage of SB 2249 would put clinical decisions back in the hands of patients and their doctors, rather than insurance companies. On behalf of the providers we serve, tending to patients battling chronic conditions for the rest of their lives, we sincerely request your support for SB 2249.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Brian Nyquist'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Brian Nyquist, MPH
President & CEO
National Infusion Center Association