

# CONNECT1D

August XX, 2016

Donna Sullivan  
Chief Pharmacy Officer  
Washington State Health Care Authority  
Washington State Prescription Drug Program  
626 8th Ave SE  
Olympia, WA 98504

Via email: Donna.Sullivan@HCA.WA.GOV

Dear Ms. Sullivan:

We are writing in response to the Washington State Health Care Authority's recent changes to the Washington State Preferred Drug List that have a detrimental impact on people living with Type 1 Diabetes.

The new preferred drug formulary contains a new drug class for long acting insulin. For the first time, people who need long acting insulin will be subject to a prior authorization in order to obtain this life-saving medication. Even the preferred drugs in this new class require a prior authorization, adding to the burden, cost and time of people living with an incurable illness.

People with Type 1 Diabetes must take insulin to survive. Without exceptions. For many in our community, the ability to take a variety of long and short acting insulin to best meet their lifestyle and dietary parameters is a key component in maintaining their health. Requiring a prior authorization for a medication that people must take to survive – and a medication that has not previously been subject to a prior authorization – simply adds an unnecessary burden on people that are already struggling to maintain their health with a complex disease. We urge you to remove the prior authorization requirement from this class of drugs.

The directive issued states that long-acting insulin is authorized as medically necessary for persons living with Type 1 Diabetes. We fail to understand the policy benefits from requiring further documentation from providers in order for patients to fill their life-sustaining prescriptions. This step slows down the health care system for everyone involved, within a climate where timely access to care is already a concern.

Many people in Washington State face delays in seeing their endocrinology team simply due to the shortage of specialty providers and the increasing rate of growth in diabetes diagnoses of all types. Despite Type 1 Diabetes being a life-long condition, the prior authorization for insulin is only good for one year. Patients may well face the challenge

of not being able to get in to see their provider to obtain the prior authorization when prescription refills are needed. This is of serious concern for those who require insulin to live.

About half of all new Type 1 Diabetes diagnosis are in adult populations. Many adults are misdiagnosed with Type 2 Diabetes and use long acting insulin in combination with other Type 2 Diabetes medications to manage their disease. We believe that anyone who needs long acting insulin in order to live should not be required to obtain prior authorization for this medicine.

Another aspect of this authorization that has us greatly concerned is the requirement for women with gestational diabetes—who must use insulin therapies for the health and safety of themselves and their babies—to fail on a therapy of combination NPH and short-acting insulin for a month before obtaining prior authorization for long-acting insulin. This requirement adds undue burden with real health risks for women and babies during a time-sensitive period of health care.

We urge you to put patients first: consider the burden of obtaining a prior authorization for life saving medicine on people living with an incurable disease.

People with Type 1 Diabetes live long and healthy lives when they have the resources to manage their disease with medicine, technology and access to a health care team. Living well with Type 1 Diabetes requires hour-to-hour daily management. Please do not add to the complexity of managing this disease by putting unnecessary restrictions on access to life-saving medicine: remove the requirement of pre-authorization for long-acting insulin.

ConnecT1D is a Washington State nonprofit organization serving the Type 1 Diabetes community. We provide emotional and social support programs for children and adults impacted by Type 1 Diabetes. We're available and eager to talk about living with this chronic condition should you or any of your colleagues wish to do so.

In closing, thank you very much for your time and appropriate consideration of our comments. You may contact me via the information provided below with any questions. We look forward to working with you, the department and Governor Inslee in reducing patient burden to support improved health outcomes for patients. Please let us know how we can work together collectively over the days and months ahead.

Sincerely,

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cc: Dorothy Frost Teeter, Director, Washington State Health Care Authority

State Representative Eileen Cody  
State Representative Joe Schmick  
State Representative Laurie Jenkins  
State Senator Randi Becker  
State Senator Annette Cleveland  
Jason McGill, Office of Governor Inslee

Signed also by the following individuals:

Name	Address	Email