

02/05/2021

Members of the Committee,

I am contacting you as a very disappointed and overwhelmed Minnesotan.

I have a pain condition, thus far un-diagnosable, that all of sudden got worse 8 years ago. I have been a prisoner in my own body. I am not able to tolerate most medications, take supplements, use a heating pad, use alternative medicine, go for a walk, you name it, without having excruciating pain. I have tried over 100 different therapies both alternative and western medicine, which have not helped my condition. There is one treatment that is helping me and, without it, the excruciating pain comes back. This is Xeomin, a form of Botox. I had to switch from "Botox" to Dysport(different brand) and then to the product Xeomin which is more natural with fewer preservatives (as told to me by my doctor). I was reacting to the others because of allergies.

Xeomin, Botox, and Dysport all have a patient savings plan. The savings plan for Xeomin offers up to \$5000 in help with treatments per calendar year, however four states are discriminated against including Minnesota. This is due to the way the language is written in the Minnesota statute. It says we can get help with the price of the medication but not the procedure. That is how the drug companies' legal team sees it.

Xeomin is about \$700 the procedure is about \$2500 depending on the clinic rates. So people in 46 other states can get compensation for the procedure, but I continue to have to pay a high deductible plan (\$6950) on top of the treatment costs every year because someone may not have fully known how the wording of the statute would be interpreted to exclude Minnesota from the savings plan offered by Merz. My deductible gets higher every year, I can only get the injection every 10-12 weeks and if I have other expensive tests and use my deductible up before my Xeomin treatment, which I had to do this year due to my pain, then I am disqualified from the savings plan because my health insurance that I pay over \$300 a month for starts paying for treatment. How is this helping me? The savings plan would help me pay for about two treatments that I have no choice but to take for the rest of my life, in order to have a 1 out of 10 quality of life. Re-wording the statute would allow myself and many others to qualify. Nothing is helping me, but this treatment. If this was your child, mother, father, sister, brother, friend.....what would you do? If this was you? What would you do?

The statute needs to be changed. Four states should not have their citizens discriminated against when 46 other states have statutes that don't disqualify their citizens. No one asks to be in pain, no one asks for injuries and accidents to happen to them. The Attorney general was no help.

Changing this to include Minnesota in full participation of their savings program and not just the drug would help many patients like me. Even in a pandemic it has resulted in clinics forcing us to pay the treatment costs up front in case they have a problem getting paid and even though I have almost an 800 credit score, have set up a payment plan and have paid on time, they continue to harass me and others. Some clinics are literally holding our treatments hostage until we pay them thousands of dollars. What choice do we have? I don't know how I will keep being able to pay for this. Insurance plans with the high deductibles are bad enough but my state's statutes (wording) is causing this. It's not right. I am getting punished for the people who don't pay their bills by the clinics deciding we should pay up front. What clinic on earth makes you pay up front \$3000, tells you 3 days before Christmas that the treatment costs must be paid 2 weeks before your injection or your appointment will be canceled?? I need this to live!. I didn't ask to have this pain and I wouldn't wish it on anyone. Xeomin is the only form of Botox I can tolerate.

Please we need to stop the cycle of hopelessness for patients like me. Worrying they will lose their life savings, be disabled or worse. Please, I am begging you to help. They claim covance deals with the savings program. Minnesota is one of four states that can't have the drug costs with procedure costs reimbursed because of the way a statute is

written. I can't believe I would have to consider moving to another state. I am a single, self-employed student loan carrier. I never thought I would be in a position where I would have to do these treatments. I didn't have to go to the doctor much before my pain got worse as I could be active and it was under control. Please help.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Jennifer Winer

Minnetonka, MN 55305