



April 18, 2024

Dear Members of the House Health Finance and Policy Committee,

On behalf of the more than 10,000 members of the Minnesota Medical Association (MMA), I am writing to thank the author for including the contents of HF 3578, regarding prior authorization reform, in HF 4571, the committee's omnibus bill.

Too many patients experience dangerous delays in care due to unnecessary and unwarranted prior authorization requirements. The included language directly addresses these serious concerns by prohibiting prior authorization for a limited list of services where a delay in care leads to serious negative patient health outcomes. These items include medications to treat a substance use disorder, outpatient mental health treatment, treatments to fight cancer consistent with national cancer-care guidelines, and chronic conditions, among others. The legislation also requires health plans to submit data reports to the Commissioner of Health, to develop recommendations to improve the prior authorization process for both patients and providers

Most importantly, this language will greatly improve the health outcomes for Minnesotans. 94% of physicians report that prior authorization has led to care delays, 80% report that prior authorization can and has led to treatment abandonment by patients, and 33% report that prior authorization has led to a serious adverse event for their patients, including 19% reporting that it has been a life-threatening event, or one intended to prevent a permanent impairment. Additionally, while prior authorization may have a role for services for which the treatment is questionable or where services may be overutilized, the overuse of the process delays needed care, adds to administrative costs, and results in a net cost to population health.

National data also shows that physicians complete on average of 41 prior authorizations per week and that they or their staff spend more than 13 hours a week on getting prior authorization approvals. Growing prior authorization burdens the leading driver of physician burnout, and this legislation will have a positive impact on the state's physician workforce.

The MMA thanks you for the inclusion of this item in the omnibus bill.

Sincerely,

Laurel Ries, MD
President, Minnesota Medical Association