

Dear Maine Congressional Delegation

We, the undersigned, represent a cross section of Maine patient advocacy groups writing to you to express our opposition to the Trump Administration's Medicare Part D Payment Modernization Model that would impact beneficiaries' prescription drug plans starting in 2022. Specifically, we object to the Trump Administration's last-minute effort to significantly weaken Part D's Six Protected Classes.

As you are probably aware, when Medicare Part D was first enacted, six classes of clinical concern were identified, and participating plans were required to cover all or substantially all drugs within each of the classes. Many of the Mainers we serve were guaranteed and relied on the protections provided by this policy. Mainers struggling with cancer, epilepsy, mental illness, rare diseases, and HIV/AIDS. Patients with complex needs that cannot effectively be addressed by a uniform one-size-fits-all approach.

As a result of these last-minute revisions, participating Part D plans will now be allowed to only cover one drug per class within the six protected classes - eliminating the requirement that all drugs included in the six protected classes be covered on plans' Part D formularies. (Drugs that treat HIV/AIDS patients have a one-year delay until protective status would also be removed in 2023.) Furthermore, any plan participating in this model would be permitted to include only one drug per class across all classes on the formulary, a further reduction from the current standard of two drugs per class throughout Part D.

Under this new model, we fear our patient communities will see reductions in access to vital therapies, fewer treatment options and potential delays in necessary treatments. Patients like the ones we serve often suffer from complex illnesses and must try multiple drugs before settling on a single treatment. Furthermore, since critical drugs needed for treatment may no longer be covered, we fear our patients may be forced to choose less effective, riskier options.

Maine's seniors and vulnerable citizens, already facing hardships due to the ongoing pandemic, should not be denied access to vital medications and treatments. We hope you will join us in urging the Biden administration to withdraw the demonstration model and instead focus on implementing policies that will truly improve coverage and strengthen access for all of Maine's Medicare beneficiaries.

Sincerely,
Epilepsy Foundation of New England
ALS, Northern New England Chapter
Rare New England
The Hemophilia Alliance of Maine
Frannie Peabody Center
Free ME From Lung Cancer
Health Equity Alliance
Purple Iris Foundation



Northern
New England
Chapter

