



Oncology Therapy Access and Biologic Therapy Access Working Groups



2025 MEETING SUMMARY

The Alliance for Patient Access' Oncology Therapy Access and Biologics Therapy Access Working Groups convened on August 1-2, 2025 in Washington, DC to discuss emerging access challenges. Clinicians from across the country described how insurer-imposed barriers threaten quality of care and patient outcomes.

UTILIZATION MANAGEMENT

Prior Authorization and Reauthorization

Clinicians expressed growing concern over prior authorization requirements that now extend beyond costly medications to include low-cost generics, biomarker testing, imaging scans and other standard services. Even when a patient is stable on an effective medication, reauthorization is often required, adding administrative delays and risking treatment interruptions. One oncologist said, "Having to reauthorize a medication that's been working is frustrating. I spend countless hours on the phone."

Some prior authorizations necessitate peer-to-peer reviews, but many participants noted they rarely speak to specialists in their own field.

Care Pathways

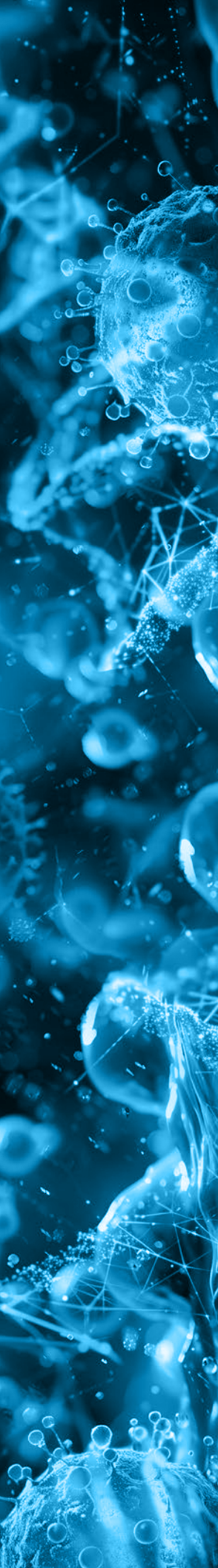
Meeting participants noted that, while care pathways may be appropriate for certain patients,

the pathways sometimes require patients to try less optimal therapies before accessing the clinician's recommended treatment. "In oncology, disease progression while stepping through other therapies can be deadly for some patients," said one oncologist. Attendees reiterated that all patients, even those with the same cancer, are unique. Care pathways may overlook individual needs and impede tailored treatment in a field that should be highly personalized.

Non-medical Switching

Non-medical switching, a practice in which an insurer changes a stable patient's medication for reasons unrelated to their health, remains a widespread issue. A clinician said, "These decisions are not based on science."

Clinicians described multiple instances where patients were forced to switch treatment options when insurers put "alternatives" on the formulary solely to cut costs.



This switch can sometimes impact the patient's responsiveness and require an increase in dosage, ultimately increasing out-of-pocket costs for patients. "There's an emotional toll to these practices because it impacts real people and their lives," said a clinician.

FORMULARY INFLUENCE ON ACCESS TO BIOLOGICS

Meeting participants raised concerns that insurer formulary design increasingly determines which biologics patients can access. In some cases, the only FDA-approved medication is excluded entirely, forcing patients to forgo or delay effective treatment. This influence can have significant clinical consequences in oncology and other specialties where biologics are tailored to disease subtypes and biomarker profiles.

Clinicians also reported that insurers sometimes list only the highest-cost biosimilars, removing lower-cost options for patients. These formulary selections are often made without consulting clinicians, creating situations where cost considerations override necessary care.

BIOMARKER TESTING

Ensuring that patients receive the appropriate treatment at the appropriate time is fundamental to patient-centered care. One tool that can help streamline diagnosis and identify appropriate treatment is biomarker testing. These simple laboratory tests have long served as a critical tool in cancer treatment, but recent advancements have seen their utility expand into other disease states.

Attendees acknowledged the value of biomarker testing for other diseases and recognized that their use will only increase. Clinicians agreed that, when it comes to diagnostic testing, policies should keep up with the innovation.

NEXT STEPS

Meeting participants were enthusiastic about the opportunity to increase awareness about policy issues in mental health and lend their voice to patient advocacy. Participants offered ideas for new educational resources and expressed interest in legislative engagement.

GET INVOLVED

To learn more about AfPA's Oncology Therapy Access and Biologics Therapy Access Working Groups, visit our website at

[**AllianceForPatientAccess.Org**](https://allianceforpatientaccess.org)

or contact Isabelle Logsdon

[**ILogsdon@allianceforpatientaccess.org**](mailto:ILogsdon@allianceforpatientaccess.org)
