

RISE Delaware Update: Fight Pre-Authorization in Traditional Medicare

Medicare Report

by Sen. Karen Peterson (Ret.)

Over the past three years, we worked long and hard to save our Medicare Supplement plan when the State tried to force us into a Medicare Advantage plan. It was a long, exhausting, expensive battle -- but we won. Now those benefits are under attack by the Trump administration, despite his campaign promise to “not touch Medicare.”

On June 27th, the Trump administration announced a “pilot project” in six states that will require pre-authorization for 17 procedures not previously required under traditional Medicare. The six states are New Jersey, Ohio, Oklahoma, Texas, Arizona, and Washington. The pilot project is supposed to last for six years but the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) may add additional services.\

Why should we care? First, because we have State of Delaware retirees who live in those six states who will be affected by these changes. Second, because this is the beginning of the end for traditional Medicare – if we let it happen. Third, because private contractors using artificial intelligence will decide which procedures to approve or deny – and they will be paid a percentage of the money they save Medicare by denying treatment.

This “sneak attack” on traditional Medicare should be taken seriously. Dr. Mehmet Oz, the CMS director, is a big proponent of Medicare Advantage and believes that it should replace traditional Medicare. We cannot let that happen.

RISE President Lisa Diller is participating in national efforts to stop the destruction of Medicare as we know it. We can help by writing or calling our Congressional delegation and telling them that this is unacceptable. We fought back three years ago – and we need to do it again.

From Lisa Diller:

Greetings all—I am passing along the information that a national group of retirees is circulating to fight the pre-authorization battle in Traditional Medicare. At this time, the letter is being circulated in the House of Representatives.

1. Representatives Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Lloyd Doggett began circulating a letter in the House of Representatives urging Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation (CMMI) to walk back the proposal.

Here is the direct link to the letter.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1XVM5-wuVihCOF6zJBLJgYVnl7sC0UkQy/view>

2. Retiree groups across the country are asking their supporters to write or call their Congressional representatives and ask them to sign on to the letter. Below is a sample script that you can use to write or call Representative Sarah McBride.

How to contact Representative McBride:

Representative Sarah McBride

<https://mcbride.house.gov/contact>

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Hello,

My name is {your name} and I'm a voter in Delaware.

I am calling/writing you to urge you to sign a letter authored by Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, which calls on Dr. Oz and CMS to stop using prior authorization in traditional Medicare.

Prior authorization has been a disaster in Medicare Advantage and private health care plans. We cannot allow greedy corporations to make people on Medicare wait for treatment.

Please sign the letter led by Congresswoman Ocasio-Cortez.

Thank you.

Here is a recent article about the letter from the Tampa Free Press:

<https://www.tampafp.com/aoc-dem-lawmakers-urge-cms-to-halt-new-medicare-pilot-program/>

At this time, I have not heard of similar action in the Senate.
Stay tuned.

Lisa

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Elisa Diller, President

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