

February 3rd, 2020

Chair Salinas and members of the committee,

My name is Christopher Pettit. I live with psoriasis and I am here to advocate on behalf of the National Psoriasis Foundation and over 105,000 Oregonians living with psoriatic disease. I want to encourage you to vote yes to provide guardrails in utilization management techniques which impacts a patient's access to care and support HB 4102.

I was diagnosed with severe plaque psoriasis at the age of 13 and I've have had to fight my insurance for every medication my doctor has recommended. At its worse my disease covered 85% of my body with thick, itchy plaques that crack and bleed. It feels like chapped lips, but all over my body. The pain from my open wounds and the constant itching sensation keeps me up all hours of the night.

Topicals are typically the first step, but when your body is 85% covered in thick plaques, it takes a whole tube just to get one coat of medication on. Due to the severity of my disease I was told I should try a biologic medication. Next was a drug which is typically prescribed for cancer. Due to my high liver values my provider and I knew this would not be a good fit, but it was what my insurer would cover so I was forced to try it.

After two months of appeals, I was approved for a TNF inhibitor. I started noticing clearing within 6 weeks, but it suddenly stopped working. My provider thought that because I was a bigger guy, it was the dosage and wanted to increase my injections, but again, insurance denied treatment. My disease was very aggressive and newer more effective drugs had hit the market, once again I was blocked at this point. I found a new provider and was able to get into a bridge program through the manufacturer until I was able to win the appeal.

That medication kept me clear for over a year, but it took much longer to achieve that level of remission because my disease had started to spread and worsen in the months I was waiting on insurance approval. During those months without treatment, the pain and uncomfortable plaques returned, I would bleed all over my clothing and furniture and I became increasingly irritable due to the lack of sleep, which impacted my parenting and relationships.

I would not want anyone to have to go through the months of stress, pain, and frustration I had to go through. I encourage this committee to vote yes on HB 4102 to ensure that patients have a better process to navigate when trying to access treatment options that are right for them.

Chris Pettit

Beaverton Resident