



New York State

2016 Legislative Action Agenda Ensuring Access to Proper Medication

Medication plays a vital role to the treatment and recovery from psychiatric disorders. It is imperative that people living with a mental illness have access to the medications their doctors believe are most appropriate for them.

The Executive Budget for Fiscal Year 2015-16, once again excluded prescriber prevails. **This means that doctors prescribing medication for someone on Medicaid would have to choose from a limited list of drugs.** If the medication they believe would best suit their patient is not on the list, the doctor would not be able to prescribe it. The Legislature had it restored in the final budget, but we expect that it will once again be omitted in the 2016-17 Executive Budget.

In some cases people with private insurance coverage may not be able to access their prescribed medication. In these situations the provider will only cover less expansive options.

In both situations, **the patient would have to fail-first on the approved medication, before able to “step-up” to the medication their doctor originally prescribed.**

NAMI-NYS vehemently opposes this dangerous practice!

Medications that treat psychiatric disorders are not interchangeable and it should be up to a doctor and a patient to decide medication is appropriate. Eliminating Prescriber Prevails is a dangerous proposition, as **not providing people living with a mental illness with the most appropriate medication can lead to more emergency room visits as well as possible interactions with the criminal justice system,** these preventable outcomes would have a greater financial consequence than proactively allowing a trained medical professional to decide what medication is proper.

NAMI-NYS supports the bill S-3419A/A-2834A which would regulate the use of step therapy by private insurance providers.

NAMI-NYS urges our legislative leaders to protect people’s recover by fighting for Prescriber Prevails in the budget and supporting S-3419A/A-2834A.