
ASMBS Advocacy Update

January 2017

Prepared by Christopher Gallagher

HEADLINES:

115th Congress Convenes

OCAN February 27, 2017 Advocacy Day

OCC Participates in NY Medicaid Hearing on Obesity Drugs

115th Congress Convenes

The 115th Congress formally convened on January 3rd with House and Senate Republicans focusing on passing a budget resolution, which would signal their intention to repeal many key revenue aspects of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), such as the tax penalties, tax credits and cost-sharing subsidies central to the ACA's individual mandate to purchase health insurance. However, the key congressional healthcare committees would still need to craft actual legislation to accomplish the ACA repeal goals laid out in the budget resolution. The Obesity Care Continuum (OCC) will continue to urge Congress to include broad coverage of all evidence-based obesity treatment services in any package of health care reforms.

OCAN February 27, 2017 Advocacy Day

The Obesity Care Advocacy Network (OCAN) will be hosting an advocacy day on Monday, February 27, 2017, which is being designed to include representatives from across the obesity multi-disciplinary treatment team spectrum. The legislative focus of the advocacy day will be the Treat and Reduce Obesity Act (TROA) and securing support for a congressional National Obesity Care Week Resolution. For more details, please contact OCAN Washington Coordinator Chris Gallagher at chris@potomaccurrents.com.

The tentative agenda for the February 27, 2017 Advocacy Day is as follows:

8:30 am – 9:30 am	Advocacy Prep
9:30 am – 11:30 am	Hill Visits
11:30 am – 1:00 pm	Congressional Briefing
1:00 pm – 3:30 pm	Hill Visits
4:00 pm – 5:30 pm	Reception (PAC event)

OCC Participates in New York State Medicaid Hearing regarding Obesity Drug Coverage

On December 15, 2016, Obesity Medicine Association and Obesity Action Coalition (OAC) member Dr. Scot Kolsin represented the OAC and the obesity community when he testified before the New York State Medicaid Evidence Based Benefit Review Advisory Committee, and “urged the New York State Department of Health to recognize that obesity is a complex chronic disease and that those affected by obesity should have access to the same medically necessary and covered treatment avenues afforded to all others who suffer from chronic disease, including prevention/counseling, medications, endoscopy and surgery.”

In his written statement, Dr. Kolsin and the OAC also highlighted that “over the last ten years, significant medical advances have been made in the development of obesity drugs. That fact combined with our country’s current and growing obesity epidemic, clearly make health plans that continue to exclude coverage for FDA-approved obesity drugs out of date and out of touch with the current scientific evidence surrounding these new pharmaceutical treatments...and therefore, the OAC urges the New York State Department of Health to provide coverage under the State’s Medicaid program for all FDA-approved obesity drugs so that Medicaid beneficiaries may have access to another key component of comprehensive obesity treatment.”