
ASMBS Activity Report

August 2014

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HEADLINES:

Johnson Blumenauer Obesity Letter

September 11th FDA Hearing on Liraglutide

TROA Update

Johnson/Blumenauer Obesity Letter

In late July, Representatives Johnson (D-TX) and Blumenauer (D-OR) circulated a Dear Colleague and sign-on letter to Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Burwell to all House members.

This letter urges HHS to utilize the same strategy recently employed by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) with health insurers that provide care through Multi-State Health Plans (MSHPs) and the Federal Employee Health Benefit (FEHB) Program. OPM recently issued guidance encouraging MSHP and FEHB plans to provide full coverage of obesity treatments. OPM also stated that the agency would no longer tolerate plans excluding obesity treatment coverage on the basis that obesity is a "lifestyle" condition or that treatment is cosmetic.

At the time of this report, the following House members had agreed to sign the Johnson/Blumenauer letter:

Madeleine Z. Bordallo (D-Guam)
Corrine Brown (D-FL)
G.K. Butterfield (D-NC)
Tony Cardenas (D-CA)
Andre Carson (D-IN)
Yvette Clark (D-NY)
Jim Costa (D-CA)
Rosa DeLauro (D-CT)
Marcia L Fudge (D-OH)
Al Green (D-TX)
Michael Honda (D-CA)
Hank Johnson (D-GA)
Barbara Lee (D-CA)
Zoe Lofgren (D-CA)
Nita Lowey (D-NY)
Jim McGovern (D-MA)
Jim Moran (D-VA)
Gloria Negrete McLeod (D-CA)
Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC)
Charles Rangel (D-NY)
Lucille Roybal-Allard (D-CA)
Bobby L. Rush (D-IL)
Linda Sanchez (D-CA)
Paul D. Tonko (D-NY)
Maxine Waters (D-CA)

Deadline for signatures on the letter is September 11th.

ASMBS to Participate in September 11th FDA Hearing on Liraglutide

ASMBS will present oral comments during the upcoming September 11th Food and Drug Administration (FDA) EMDAC hearing regarding the new drug application (NDA) 206321 for Liraglutide. ASMBS's comments will mirror those made at previous FDA panels where new obesity drugs were being reviewed – urging FDA to provide a fair and balanced review of Liraglutide so that physicians and their patients have access to new treatment tools to address our country's obesity epidemic. ASMBS will also be submitting a written statement for the hearing record as part of the Obesity Care Continuum.

Update on Treat and Reduce Obesity Act

At the time of this report, the TROA had 5 cosponsors in the Senate (Murkowski, Begich, Coons, Hagan and Kirk) and 110 cosponsors in the House. Related to the TROA, House and Senate sponsors are circulating two “Dear Colleague” letters to HHS – urging the Department to utilize its administrative authority to include coverage of FDA-approved obesity drugs under Medicare Part D and expand the list of eligible healthcare professionals to provide intensive behavioral therapy.