



January 14, 2015

To Whom It May Concern,

We write today on behalf of the Northern New England Clinical Oncology Society (NNECOS), a professional society incorporated in NH in 1990, whose mission is “To assure the availability of and access to high quality oncology care in our region.” NNECOS represents oncology professionals in Maine, Vermont and New Hampshire, and currently has about 430 members including about 150 physician members.

It has come to the attention of the Board of NNECOS that efforts are underway to pass legislation in New Hampshire that will assure that patients with cancer who have health insurance that is regulated by the state of New Hampshire will not have to pay higher out of pocket costs for their cancer therapy if their anticancer medication comes in an oral form, than if it were to come in an intravenous form. We support that effort.

While we have not seen the actual language of the bill that is to be introduced in the New Hampshire legislature this year, this type of legislation is completely consistent with the mission of NNECOS. The Oral Parity Laws assure that patients are not financially penalized just because their cancer treatment comes in the form of a pill. It is well documented that the higher the out of pocket costs of a cancer treatment, the less likely is it that the patient will be able to take that treatment¹.

Further, this type of legislation has been enacted in more than 30 states throughout the United States, including all of the New England States except for New Hampshire. This type of legislation is strongly endorsed by the American Society of Clinical Oncology, the American Cancer Society, the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society of America, the International Foundation and many other cancer advocacy organizations. We would encourage the New Hampshire Legislature to pass an Oral Parity Law in 2015.

If you have questions for the NNECOS Board, please contact Lori Aubrey, Executive Director of NNECOS at info@nnecos.org. or Denis Hammond, MD at denishammond@comcast.net.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Northern New England Clinical Oncology Society, and our more than 430 members, we thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Tracey Weisberg, MD
President

¹ Dusetzina, SB et.al Cost Sharing and Adherence to Tyrosine Kinase Inhibitors for Patients with Chronic Myeloid Leukemia. Journal of Clinical Oncology 32(4): 306-311, February 1, 2014.