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Colorado Drug Pricing Review Board
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Subject: Enbrel Drug Review Board Patient Commentary

Hello,

My name is Corey Greenblatt, and I am commenting on behalf of the more than one million chronically ill patients living in Colorado and the thousands of patients who rely on Enbrel to live their daily lives, whom GHLF represents. Thank you for allowing me to comment today regarding Enbrel and its affordability. While the effort to reduce drug prices is one of the most pressing concerns in our current healthcare system, we believe that any measure that would reduce the accessibility of life-saving drugs like the ones currently under review would have disastrous effects on patients in the state.

By background, GHLF is a non-profit patient group that works to improve the quality of life for people with chronic disease, often focusing on those least able to advocate for themselves. Through our websites, social media channels, and conventional media, GHLF reaches more than 10 million chronically ill people monthly in the United States – in English and Spanish. Our patient community is often forced to try multiple medications before finding the one that works best for them. With that in mind, once they find something that works, regardless of what it is, they hesitate to give it up and try something new.

Patients spend years of their lives trying and failing on various treatment options before they finally find a treatment plan that allows them to operate their daily lives at a manageable level of pain. Almost every patient will tell you that pain-free days are practically non-existent, and the goal is to get to the point of pain reduction that allows them to complete daily tasks. During this review process, GHLF is concerned that patient outcomes will be sacrificed for price reduction. We understand that the actions taken by the drug pricing review board are intended to ensure that patients who currently have access will not lose that access; however, we have not been given any indication of how the board will guarantee this.

We appreciate that you are taking the steps today to listen directly to the patient and caregiver community, but we want to ensure that this listening session is not just a box to be checked off. We want a more transparent process that doesn't end in this series of listening sessions. Patients are the ones who will be ultimately impacted by these decisions more than any other stakeholder, and they deserve to have the complete set of information about what went into these final decisions and why the conclusions were ultimately reached.

Beyond that, GHLF is concerned that this review board has chosen two drugs that have also been selected as part of the Medicare Drug Pricing Negotiation and will be making its decision while

these medications will be forced to lower their prices in the Medicare market. We have no idea what impact that negotiation will have on the market, but if these manufacturers are forced to comply with multiple price structures at the federal and state levels, there is a genuine concern that they could pull their treatment out of the market entirely and focus solely on the private marketplace. This is an extreme example, but there is no precedent for this type of drug pricing review and negotiation, and it would be short-sighted to ignore these warnings completely. We would prefer to have the board wait until the Medicare negotiations and prices have been set, and then can build off that rather than coming up with their own competing set of pricing guidelines.

Our organization would rather see drug pricing discussions focused on rebates and how they can lower patient costs rather than forcing drug manufacturers to comply with a price limit that, without greater transparency, seems arbitrary. We hope to see further discussions on this topic continue to involve patients and caregivers to ensure that they are not left behind in the name of lower price tags.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide these comments, and I am happy to take any questions now or later.

Best wishes,
Corey Greenblatt
Associate Director, Policy and Advocacy
Global Healthy Living Foundation

