



March 5, 2024

Senate Commerce and Consumer Protection Committee

Dear Chair Klein and Committee Members,

On behalf of Children's Minnesota, I am writing in support of SF3532 which makes changes to prior authorization requirements that would reduce a burden that too often impacts the patients and families we serve.

Children's Minnesota is the state's largest pediatric healthcare system, seeing more than 160,000 kids annually. In 2023, the 30 members of our prior authorization team worked to complete over 81,000 requests for nearly 58,000 individual patients. These were children suffering from cancer, heart conditions, asthma and other diseases that needed prior authorization (PA) approvals before our clinicians could treat them with the appropriate medications and health care services.

In one patient's case, an initial PA request for a cancer treatment drug was denied because the drug requested was not the preferred drug by the insurer, even though it followed the recommended standard of care. In another case a request for a liquid form of medication to treat a cardiovascular condition was denied and a tablet was suggested instead. The patient was 2 months old and the medication in tablet form could not be dosed or administered appropriately for a child of that age and size. Getting PA approvals for liquid medications that can be appropriately dosed for young children has also been a challenge for patients in hospice or those experiencing neonatal withdrawal.

Our prior authorization team and members of the care teams treating these children work tirelessly on cases like these, spending hours working on individual PA requests while also trying to protect patient families from additional worries and concerns. After going back and forth with denials and appeals on these cases, over 95% of these requests eventually do get approved, but too often the time it takes to complete the process threatens to delay patient care leaving families to make a difficult decision to move forward with their child's treatment without knowing if it will be covered by their insurance.

When a family comes to us with a sick child, they should not have to wait for cumbersome processes to be completed before being able to access the treatment their child needs to get better. I hope we can count on your support for SF3532.

Sincerely,

Amanda Jansen, MPP
Director of Public Policy
Children's Minnesota