NAMI Oregon Supports Open Access to Vital Mental Health Medications

NAMI Oregon opposes proposed legislation that would require patients who are prescribed mental health medications to gain prior authorization from the Oregon Health Plan or Coordinated Care Organizations before obtaining a prescription. Currently, critical mental health medications such as atypical antipsychotics are exempt from OHP's "enforceable" preferred drug list (PDL).

If access to antipsychotics is limited, patients can be denied their medication by the pharmacy if their medication isn't on the "approved" list. This will lead to unacceptable delays in access to prescriptions. Recent events have highlighted that delays in treatment can lead to catastrophic results.

➔ **NAMI Oregon opposes provisions in HB 2098 that would limit access to mental health medications by placing them on "approved" and "non-approved" lists.**

Mental health medications are an important tool for many individuals in managing their mental illness. Antidepressants and antipsychotics make a life-changing difference for thousands, allowing lives of success and inspiration, while newly approved drugs and those in development offer the promise of needed options for those who do not respond to current drugs or suffer serious side effects.

NAMI Oregon favors including language in HB 2098 that ensures neither the Oregon Health Authority nor newly created Coordinated Care Organizations can raise onerous barriers to mental health medications.

➔ **NAMI Oregon favors efforts to educate prescribers and to identify problem prescribers so that best practices are followed.**

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