

# ASCO® State/Regional Affiliate Program

## 2025 – 2026 STATE AFFILIATE COUNCIL PRIORITIES

### CO-PAY ACCUMULATORS

- Co-pay accumulators prevent a manufacturer’s co-pay assistance from applying towards a patient’s co-pay or out-of-pocket maximum, resulting in patients’ out-of-pocket costs increasing. Such tactics negate the intended benefit of patient assistance programs, remove a safety net for patients who need specialty medications but cannot afford them, and could lead to poorer outcomes for people with cancer.
- ASCO and State Affiliates are advocating to prohibit copay accumulators.
- ASCO Policy Brief: [Co-Pay Accumulator and Co-Pay Maximizers](#)

### PHARMACY BENEFIT MANAGERS (PBMs)

- Pharmacy Benefit Managers (PBMs) are “third-party administrators contracted by health plans, large employers, unions and government entities to manage prescription drug benefits programs.”
- ASCO and State Affiliates are advocating for PBM reforms.
- ASCO Statement: [Pharmacy Benefit Managers and Their Impact on Cancer Care](#)

### PRIOR AUTHORIZATION

- The Council views prior authorization as a barrier for patients with cancer to receive proper care. Prior authorization requires patients or prescribers to secure pre-approval as a condition of payment or insurance coverage of the prescribed medication.
- ASCO and State Affiliates continue to advocate for streamlining and improved transparency in prior authorization requirements to ensure timely access to care.
- ASCO Statement: [Prior Authorization](#) and ASCO Prior Authorization [Survey Summary](#)

### STEP THERAPY

- The Council considers step therapy, or “fail-first”, a barrier to care for patients with cancer. Step therapy requires a patient to try, and fail, on a payer-approved drug before the drug prescribed by the physician is covered.
- ASCO and State Affiliates are advocating for guardrails to protect patients from step therapy requirements.
- ASCO Statement: [The Impact of Utilization Management Policies for Cancer Drug Therapies](#)

### TELEMEDICINE

- The Council advocates for permanent telehealth flexibilities.
- ASCO Statement: [Telemedicine in Cancer Care](#), which encouraged policymakers to permanently expand coverage to adequately reimburse providers for telehealth services.