

2023 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 289

BY REPRESENTATIVE PHELPS

A RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Louisiana Department of Health to review Medicaid prior authorization criteria for prescribing L-glutamine to treat acute complications of sickle cell disease and to report its findings by February 1, 2024.

WHEREAS, sickle cell disease is the most common inherited hemoglobin disorder, but despite its high mortality rates and severe economic impact, needs for effective therapies for the disease remain unmet; and

WHEREAS, sickle cell disease can affect any organ and has particularly harmful effects on the kidneys, lungs, and spleen; and

WHEREAS, vaso-occlusive crises are common among patients, causing recurrent episodes of acute pain and leading to irreversible organ damage, poor quality of life, and stroke; and

WHEREAS, on average, life expectancy among persons who suffer from sickle cell disease is twenty-five to thirty years less than among those who do not have the disease; and

WHEREAS, according to a 2018 study, sickle cell disease imposes a nearly three billion dollar economic burden on the United States healthcare system annually, of which fifty-seven percent is attributed to hospital inpatient costs; and

WHEREAS, L-glutamine is indicated to reduce acute complications of sickle cell disease in adults and children five years of age and older; and

WHEREAS, one criterion for patients with Louisiana fee-for-service Medicaid to obtain a prior authorization for L-glutamine is to have been treated at an emergency room or outpatient center with intravenous pain medication twice within a twelve-month period.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Louisiana Department of Health to review Medicaid prior authorization criteria for prescribing L-glutamine to reduce acute complications of sickle cell disease and provide information including but not limited to all of the following:

- (1) The effectiveness of L-glutamine at reducing pain associated with sickle cell disease.
- (2) The feasibility of increasing access to L-glutamine by eliminating overly burdensome prior authorization criteria.
- (3) The numbers of authorizations for L-glutamine sought by healthcare providers for the treatment of Medicaid patients with sickle cell disease that were denied.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that no later than February 1, 2024, the department shall prepare and submit a written report of its findings and recommendations to the House Committee on Health and Welfare.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health and the Louisiana Sickle Cell Commission.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES