

Sample Newsletter Article

Please feel free to tailor the language below to bring the patient and health care provider voice to your blog, website, newsletter or local newspaper. The below content is optimized for SEO.

Insurance Delays and Denials Impact Patient Access to Migraine Treatment: Advocate for Change!

Migraine is a complex, often debilitating, neurological disease that impacts more than 42 million people in the United States alone. Despite the impact on patients' lives, and society as a whole, health insurance plans frequently delay, deny or switch treatment options prescribed by physicians. Migraine Meanderings and The Headache & Migraine Policy Forum partnered together to learn from the online migraine community about the impact of these policies.

Four patient surveys in 2022 and 2023 explored how insurance coverage impacts patients' ability to access physician-prescribed treatments. In total from the four surveys, there were 1,945 responses from over 500 patients, and a summary report can be found here: <https://migrainemeanderings.com/insurance-coverage>.

Challenges patients had getting treatment coverage included insurance companies' policies on combination therapy, prior authorization, non-medical switching, and step-therapy:

- Over **70%** of patients said they take more than one preventive and/or more than one abortive treatment for migraine, with many taking 4 or more. However, approval for more than one medication was a frequent challenge.
- **64%** of patients reported experiencing prior authorization requirements, and 33% experienced both prior authorization and non-medical switching. This places a huge burden on patients as well as physicians.
- **74%** reported that having to try insurance-recommended treatments first led to their disease worsening.
- **28%** reported seeking emergency treatment directly due to these insurance practices. Having to utilize emergency care creates both a physical and financial burden on patients, not to mention the health care system as a whole.

Next Steps

Addressing these migraine treatment access barriers frequently employed by health insurance plans is crucial. Insurance companies should not be able to override or delay doctor-prescribed treatment. We need your help to bring about this change! We encourage you to **download the toolkit** developed to help patients, clinicians, and legislators work together to ensure patient access to migraine treatment. Participate in the **social media awareness campaign**. **Write a letter to your legislator**. Learn how to **file an insurance complaint**. It is time for change, and together we can make a difference!