

Protect Patients and People with Disabilities in Massachusetts

As we look to control health care costs in Massachusetts, it is imperative that legislators approach this in a manner that does not discriminate against patients and people with disabilities.

In order to do this, **it is imperative that we have appropriate patient protections in place.** These protections include:

- **A ban on the use of the Quality-Adjusted Life Year, QALY**, a discriminatory metric that puts a lower value on treating seniors, people with disabilities, and patients with chronic conditions. For this reason, the Affordable Care Act included a ban on the use of the QALY in Medicare, but some state Medicaid programs still attempt to use it as a cost-cutting mechanism.
- **A requirement for Massachusetts to rely on research that meet criteria of patient-centeredness**, including research that looks at patient subgroups, research that evaluates outcomes that matter to patients, and research that meets requirements of scientific rigor.
- **Robust engagement with patients and people with disabilities** surrounding the state's decision-making processes. This includes transparency regarding the state's research and a meaningful opportunity for stakeholder comments.
- **All policies must have an appeals and physician override mechanism** to ensure that patients and their clinicians remain the ultimate decisionmakers in regard to care.

The Massachusetts legislature is currently considering, ***An Act Advancing Health Care Research and Decision-Making Centered on Patients and People with Disabilities***, a bill that would enshrine these patient protections. The bill has been introduced in both the House and Senate as:

H. 201 by Representatives Marjorie C. Decker and Jon Santiago

S.753 by Senator Brendan P. Crighton.

Please reach out to your State Senator and Representative and encourage them to stand against discrimination of people with disabilities, seniors, and patients with chronic illnesses by co-sponsoring H.201 and S.753.