

Support SB25-084: Expanding Access to Lifesaving Intravenous Nutrition for Children with Special Healthcare Needs

Sponsored by: Senators Mullica & Simpson, Representatives Bradfield & Rydin



The problem: Parenteral nutrition and total parenteral nutrition is a lifesaving form of nutrition therapy that in Colorado is only provided at one pharmacy in the entire state for pediatric patients with Medicaid. From Greeley to Pueblo, Canon City to Rifle, pediatric patients currently have access to only one pharmacy to provide these services, which meet their nutritional needs and keep them out of the hospital.

Who is impacted: Parenteral and total parenteral nutrition (PN/TPN) is used for patients with complex nutritional needs who can't receive or tolerate the nutrition they need through traditional oral or GI system routes, such as after gastrointestinal surgeries, children with kidney and liver failure, premature birth, and some children under care before and after a bone marrow transplant.



The solution: SB25-084 will require Medicaid to pursue policies and reimbursements that ensure an adequate network of infusion pharmacies offering PN and TPN services to Medicaid patients. The bill will also require annual reporting to the legislature on the adequacy of infusion pharmacy networks that supply parenteral nutrition to Medicaid members to inform future policy considerations.



Essential Role of Pharmacies: Parenteral nutrition and total parenteral nutrition are complex formulas that are specifically tailored to the individual patient's needs. Pharmacies play a critical role in parenteral nutrition development and formulation, safe administration of the formulas, and ongoing monitoring and research as a key part of a patient's nutrition support team. **Because of reimbursement rate challenges and the complexity of offering PN & TPN, many infusion pharmacies have stopped supplying parenteral nutrition across the nation, particularly for children.**

Need for Expanded Access: There are no alternatives to parenteral nutrition if pediatric patients cannot receive all the components of their unique formula in a timely manner. Shortages in these life-sustaining therapy supplies have caused serious health problems including organ failure, severe blisters, rashes, and brain damage. **Without enough pharmacies to support parenteral nutrition, pediatric patients are at risk of lengthy, and costly, hospital stays.**

Policy Solution: SB25-084 proposes network adequacy requirements, or ways to increase access to more pharmacies that will provide TPN and PN for Colorado Medicaid to ensure timely access to these lifesaving nutrients for children and adults who are unable to receive or tolerate adequate nutrition through oral or tube feeding. Annual reporting on network adequacy of these pharmacies to the legislature will help track access-to-care outcomes over time.

Children in Colorado who have Medicaid coverage and rely on this lifegiving nutritional therapy need access to more pharmacies that can support their unique medical needs and reduce the risk of unnecessary hospitalizations.

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