

ONE HUNDRED EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE
2125 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6115

Majority (202) 225-3641
Minority (202) 225-2927

August 9, 2023

Dr. Natalia Rost, M.D.
President Elect
American Academy of Neurology
25 Massachusetts Avenue, Suite 500J
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Dr. Rost:

Thank you for appearing before the Subcommittee on Health on Tuesday, July 18, 2023, to testify at the hearing entitled "Innovation Saves Lives: Evaluating Medicare Coverage Pathways for Innovative Drugs, Medical Devices, and Technology".

Pursuant to the Rules of the Committee on Energy and Commerce, the hearing record remains open for ten business days to permit Members to submit additional questions for the record, which are attached. The format of your responses to these questions should be as follows: (1) the name of the Member whose question you are addressing, (2) the complete text of the question you are addressing in bold, and (3) your answer to that question in plain text.

To facilitate the printing of the hearing record, please respond to these questions and requests with a transmittal letter by the close of business on Wednesday, August 23, 2023. Your responses should be mailed to Jolie Brochin, Legislative Clerk, Committee on Energy and Commerce, 2125 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515 and e-mailed in Word format to Jolie.Brochin@mail.house.gov.

Thank you again for your time and effort preparing and delivering testimony before the Subcommittee.

Sincerely,



Brett Guthrie
Chair
Subcommittee on Health

cc: Anna Eshoo, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Health

The Honorable Robert E. Latta

- 1) While there is a clear need to innovate to dramatically slow the progression and ultimately cure Alzheimer's disease, millions of people currently living with the disease cannot wait around for future disease modifying therapies. To bridge that gap, how can we encourage investments in innovation today to effectively treat symptoms of Alzheimer's, like aggression and exit-seeking, which severely impacts the quality of life for patients and caregivers?
- 2) How can Congress ensure seniors have access to new therapies that alleviate the devastating symptoms of this disease?

The Honorable Dan Crenshaw

- 1) To your knowledge, *before* restricting Medicare coverage of FDA-approved therapies and devices to participants in clinical trials and studies does, does CMS do any analysis of the potential impacts on access to rural or other underserved populations? If so, is that information publicly available?

Questions for the Record

Innovation Saves Lives: Evaluating Medicare Coverage Pathways for Innovative Drugs, Medical Devices, and Technology

Dr. Natalia Rost

The Honorable Robert E. Latta

1. Ensuring that patients who are suffering from the symptoms of Alzheimer's can find relief is a top priority for the neurologists who are treating them. While the ultimate hope is to one day find a cure for Alzheimer's, continuing to investigate treatments that will alleviate certain symptoms – such as aggression and “exit-seeking” – will allow our patients to have a better quality of life as we continue to treat the underlying disease. By continuing to fund research through the National Institute for Health (NIH) and other public programs, like ARPA-H, Congress can incentive researchers to find new ways to address these issues. The AAN supports additional research into these conditions and symptoms and looks forward to continuing our work with the Committee to find ways to bring relief to our patients.
2. One of the most important things Congress can do to ensure that patients have access to novel therapies that treat the symptoms of Alzheimer's Disease and other degenerative diseases is to continue funding research through the National Institute for Health (NIH) and other federal programs. The research produced through NIH and other grants serves as the basis for novel treatments that can give families more time with their loved ones and help those suffering from Alzheimer's and other neurologic conditions find hope and relief.

Congress can also pass legislation that would bolster the Neurology Workforce, ensuring that patients suffering from this disease have access to qualified specialists that can diagnose and treat their condition. Increasing funding for Graduate Medical Education (GME) slots and creating programs to help ease the burden of debt held by physicians when they graduate from medical school will help increase the number of new neurologists in the pipeline. Congress can also pass legislation that would allow neurologists who are currently practicing to spend more time with their patients instead of focusing on burdensome paperwork. Passing legislation that curbs and reforms utilization management techniques such as prior authorizations and step therapy protocols would increase the time physicians have to spend with their patients and ensure patients get timely access to the care prescribed by their physician.

The AAN looks forward to continuing our work with the Committee to ensure that our patients have access to safe and effective treatments for Alzheimer's and other conditions.

The Honorable Dan Crenshaw

1. The AAN is not aware of and is not appraised of the specific steps in the CMS analysis of the potential impacts on access to rural or other underserved populations.