

ACR issues position statements on drug pricing, step therapy

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(HealthDay)—Two position statements developed in relation to drug

pricing and step therapy have been issued by the American College of Rheumatology (ACR).

In the position statement on drug pricing, the authors emphasize the need for safe, convenient, and affordable access to rheumatology treatments that control disease activity and prevent permanent joint and organ damage for all patients. Rational policies that mitigate rapid escalations in drug pricing are supported. Policies for determining prescription drug pricing should be transparent. In addition, proposals to address rising [drug](#) prices should address cost to the health care system, continuity of care, and out-of-pocket affordability.

In a second position statement relating to step therapy, the authors note that the ACR supports strategies to lower the cost of expensive therapies but opposes cost-saving plans that may compromise quality of care or safe clinical practice. The ACR states it does not support step therapy, fail-first policies, or tiering of medications based solely on cost. Timely access to medically necessary treatment is urged, without unnecessary barriers impeding or delaying treatment. Nonmedical switching between branded products and across therapeutic classes solely for [cost savings](#) is inappropriate and potentially harmful.

"We continue to emphasize these topics because they are so critical to the well-being of millions of Americans living with [rheumatic diseases](#)," Colin Edgerton, M.D., chair of the ACR Committee on Rheumatologic Care, said in a statement.

More information: [Position Statement - Drug Pricing](#)
[Position Statement - Step Therapy](#)

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