



California
Rheumatology
Alliance

Advocacy for Patient Access to Rheumatology Care

5230 Pacific Concourse Drive - Suite 100
Los Angeles, California 90045
(tel) 310.297.9221 ▾ (fax) 310.297.9222
www.calrheum.org ▾ info@calrheum.org

August 28, 2014

Honorable Edmund G. Brown, Jr.
Governor, State of California
State Capitol, First Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Support of California SB 964 – Network Adequacy

Dear Governor:

On behalf of the California Rheumatology Alliance (CRA), we respectfully request you sign SB 964 (Hernandez), which will increase oversight of health care service plans in regards to timely access and provider network adequacy standards.

CRA is a non-profit state medical society established to represent all practicing rheumatologists and rheumatology health professionals in California, whose mission is advocacy for patient access to rheumatology care. Many of the conditions rheumatologists treat are progressive, such as rheumatoid arthritis and lupus. Our patients' diseases lead to worse suffering, disability and even death when not adequately treated.

The Affordable Care Act requires qualified health plans to maintain adequate provider networks. Yet, a recent analysis of exchange plans nationwide shows approximately 40% of plan networks were classified as ultranarrow or narrow. Within the state, Medi-Cal and Covered California offer narrow provider networks, limiting access to health care providers, including rheumatologists. Covered California has reported questions of provider directory accuracy, timely access, physician confusion regarding network status, and benefit design uncertainty. California must ensure that narrow networks are adequate and provide timely access to quality care.

As such, we strongly support the enactment of SB 964, requiring Department of Managed Care (DMHC) surveys for timely access and network adequacy be done separately and more frequently for Medi-Cal managed care and Covered California to ensure network adequacy for enrollees.

Please sign SB 964 into law to ensure Californians receive timely health care. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary Feldman".

Gary R. Feldman, MD
President