



JAMES L. MADARA, MD
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, CEO

ama-assn.org
t (312) 464-5000

July 10, 2019

The Honorable Jan Schakowsky
U.S. House of Representatives
2367 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Earl Blumenauer
U.S. House of Representatives
1111 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Buddy Carter
U.S. House of Representatives
2432 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mike Kelly
U.S. House of Representatives
1707 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Schakowsky, Carter, Blumenauer, and Kelly:

On behalf of the physician and medical student members of the American Medical Association (AMA), I am writing to express our support for H.R. 1948, the “Lymphedema Treatment Act of 2019.” This bill would help fill a treatment gap for patients with lymphedema by providing for Medicare coverage of certain lymphedema compression treatment items as durable medical equipment (DME) items.

Lymphedema afflicts millions of Americans, with the majority of cases caused by cancer treatments that damage the body’s lymph transport and immune functions. When left untreated or under-treated, lymphedema is progressive and can put patients at greater risk for serious infections or other costly complications. While certain treatments for breast cancer-related lymphedema are required by law to be covered by private insurance plans, Medicare beneficiaries with lymphedema currently lack coverage for compression therapy, an essential component of care they must use to manage their chronic disease. As a result, many patients are not receiving appropriate and evidence-based treatment, which results in a decline in their health status and quality of life. Your bill would fix this treatment gap by specifically covering certain lymphedema compression treatment items under Medicare as DME items as long as they are prescribed by a physician or non-physician health professional to the extent authorized under state law.

The AMA applauds your leadership in sponsoring the Lymphedema Treatment Act of 2019 and is pleased to support this important bill.

Sincerely,

James L. Madara, MD