



CANCER LEGAL CARE

LAWYERS ON YOUR CANCER CARE TEAM

May 8, 2019

The Honorable Earl Blumenauer
1111 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Blumenauer:

As attorneys and advocates for individuals battling cancer, Cancer Legal Care thanks you for your leadership in introducing the Lymphedema Treatment Act (H.R.1948).

Lymphedema is a painful and potentially disfiguring side effect of cancer treatments caused by fluid buildup swelling affected body parts. More than three million Americans have lymphedema including forty percent of breast cancer patients. Left un- or undertreated, lymphedema causes additional medical complications, decreased quality of life, and increased morbidity.

While there is no cure, there is an effective, multipronged treatment for this chronic disease. However, Medicare patients are particularly vulnerable as Medicare does not cover a critical prong of the treatment: the compression supplies. Without the compression supplies, patients cannot receive the full treatment and, as such, are highly susceptible to re-swelling. Despite not covering the compression supplies, Medicare will cover the costly hospital visits required by individuals with uncontrolled lymphedema.

The Lymphedema Treatment Act would correct this defect in Medicare coverage by extending Part B Durable Medical Equipment coverage to compression supplies as prescribed by doctors for lymphedema patients. LTA would allow the more than 5,000 Medicare-eligible Minnesotans with lymphedema access the gold-standard of treatment.

Cancer patients must overcome too many obstacles. To leave them without coverage to manage this chronic side effect of their cancer treatment harms not only the patient but the overall Medicare budget. Appropriate and timely treatment remains the best weapon against both lymphedema and ballooning health care costs.

Sincerely,


Lindy Yokanovich, Esq.
Founder and Executive Director

