

**Letter Template from Patient with MS to Legislature:
*Need for broad prescription coverage in health plans, and legislation that encourages broad formulary choices for patients with multiple sclerosis***

Sending a letter or e-mail to your elected representatives can help elevate the issues people with MS face in maintaining their medication of choice. This template will help make it easier to contact the elected officials who may be able to offer assistance.

- To locate your congressional representative, go online to <http://www.house.gov/representatives>
- To locate your two senators, go online to http://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm
- Alternatively, you may dial the Capitol Switchboard at (202) 224-3121
- To locate your state officials, go online to http://openstates.org/find_your_legislator
- Once you have the name and address of the person you will write to, follow the template instructions by typing in suggested personal details and changing sample paragraphs to match your ideas and needs

In your letter, consider including:

- How long you have had MS and how it has impacted your life
- How long you have been taking your current MS medication
- Why you would like to keep taking your current medication
- Why switching medications might be challenging

Presented by the International Organization of Multiple Sclerosis Nurses (IOMSN) in partnership with Bayer HealthCare.



[Congressional Representative Name]
[Street Address]
[United States House of Representatives/United States Senate]
[Washington, DC 20515]

[NOTE: to find the mailing address for your state officials, visit http://openstates.org/find_your_legislator]

Dear [Representative/Senator] [insert last name],

My name is [insert name] and I live in [insert city, state]. I am writing to you today about access to medications, particularly for multiple sclerosis (MS). I have had MS for [x years] and have been stable on treatment. But this year, my health insurance plan has told me that I need to switch to a medication that is “preferred” (on formulary), even though I’ve been stable on my current medication for [insert length of time].

My healthcare provider and I made a decision to start a medication we felt was the right choice for me. In the past, my health plan has respected that decision by choosing to “grandfather” patients like me who are already stable on a medication. Sadly, that is no longer the case.

Evidence-based practice indicates that the selection of a medication should be tailored to the patient based on the aggressiveness of the disease, individual therapeutic responses, and likelihood of patient adherence. In addition, research has indicated that there may be clinical benefits for patients with MS who are able to continue with a successful treatment regimen.

Treatment decisions for your constituents should continue to be made by healthcare providers and not by health plans. I thought it was important for you to be aware of this problem and exert positive influence on these issues by supporting the principle that medical decisions should be made by the healthcare providers.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

[Your Name]
[Street Address]
[City, State, Zip]
[Phone]
[E-mail]