Step Therapy to Reduce Spending on Prescription Drugs:

Legal and Ethical Implications

a discussion with

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September 7, 2018 12:30 – 1:30 p.m.
Room LL06A-C, Lower Level of Kelvin Smith Library, 11201 Euclid Ave

It appears to be impossible to underestimate the creativity of American insurance companies as they seek ways to control health care costs – nor their ability to create hassles for patients while trying. The latest theory, and practice, is "step therapy." The theory is that in many cases physicians prescribe more expensive drugs for patients when less expensive ones will do. So it makes sense to have physicians try the less expensive treatment first, moving on to the "next step" only if necessary. Doesn't it?

Maybe not – for many reasons. As Professor Hoffman explains in a recent piece in the Food and Drug Law Journal, extra "steps" can have major consequences for some patients, causing worse outcomes and even higher costs. As she has explained, "some insurers are less than transparent with patients about their programs" and "adhere to a one-size-fits-all approach, ignoring nuanced clinical and economic evidence, and implement their policies in a discriminatory way." Join us to learn about the latest "disruptive innovation" in U.S. health care.

The Friday Public Affairs Discussion Lunch is an opportunity for students, faculty, staff, emeriti and other members of our communities to learn and question each other about public policy issues at the international, national, and local levels. Faculty and other speakers share their research and experience to get beyond the headlines and repetition in the mass media, and the wild rumors of the internet. Lunch is brown bag, but cookies and some beverages are provided by the Center for Policy Studies of the College of Arts and Sciences.

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