 

**Tennessee Cancer Specialists and SCRI Oncology Partners Applaud Congresswoman Harshbarger for Introducing H.R. 2484**

*Bipartisan Seniors’ Access to Critical Medications Act Will Reinstate Patients’ Access to Medication Delivery Services*

**Johnson City & Nashville, TN** – [Tennessee Cancer Specialists](https://tncancer.com/) and [SCRI Oncology Partners](https://cancercarescri.com/) today applauded Congresswoman Diana Harshbarger (R-TN) and Debbie Wasserman-Schultz (D-FL) for introducing the Seniors’ Access to Critical Medications Act ([H.R. 2484)](https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/house-bill/2484), which recently passed out of the House Energy & Commerce Committee.

Thousands of community oncology practices across the country utilize a medically integrated dispensing (MID) model, enabling patients and caregivers to access oral oncolytics. These medications offer an effective alternative to traditional IV chemotherapy and are available directly at a physician’s office. This long-standing practice has [proven effective](https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC9835967/) in improving medication adherence and patient outcomes. However, in 2023, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) issued a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document stating the federal government’s view that caregivers are not permitted to pick up a patient’s medication; instead, the patient must collect prescriptions in-person from a physician’s office.

If enacted into law, the Seniors’ Access to Critical Medications Act would reinstate the ability for a patient’s family or caregivers to pick their medications up from their independent, community oncology practice’s MID, or allow delivery from the physician’s office for convenience.

“CMS’ policy has created significant access challenges for our patients, forcing them to either drive long distances to receive their medication or use their health plan’s specialty pharmacy or pharmacy benefit manager (PBM) –– options that are often less convenient, impact timeliness of care, and are more costly,” said Dr. Tracy Dobbs of Tennessee Cancer Specialists. “Many of the cancer patients we treat are extremely sick and live in rural areas, meaning they are most negatively impacted by care barriers like this. Therefore, any policy that reduces burdens on them and improves their access to care would be extremely beneficial.”

“We thank Congresswoman Harshbarger for her leadership on the Seniors’ Access to Critical Medications Act, which will help ensure continuity of care for Tennessee cancer patients,” said Dr. David Spigel of SCRI Oncology Partners.

Tennessee Cancer Specialists and SCRI Oncology Partners look forward to working alongside lawmakers to pass this legislation in both chambers to protect local access to cancer care. Across Tennessee, TCS and SCRI Oncology Partners provide high-quality cancer treatment and research for thousands of patients each year.

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