

SAIM COALITION

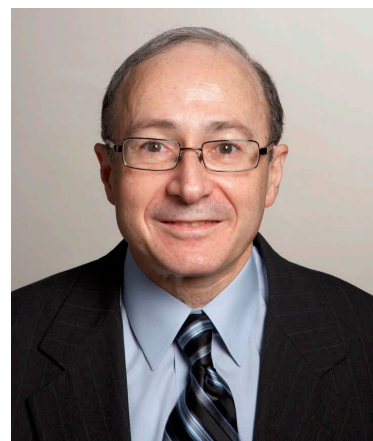
— STATE ACCESS TO INNOVATIVE MEDICINES —

Dr. Mark Lebwohl

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Dr. Mark Lebwohl has been practicing dermatology since 1983 and is a Professor and Dean for Clinical Therapeutics, and Chairman emeritus of the Department of Dermatology of the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York. He is past President of the American Academy of Dermatology (AAD).

Dr. Lebwohl was very involved in passage of the New York step therapy legislation signed into law on the last day of 2016. He said that it has had a tremendous impact on access to the right drugs. Given that dermatologists traditionally deal with a high percentage of denials, he is happy to be seeing a high success rate on appeals since the law passed.



He shared the story of a patient with numerous skin cancers who was told to go on a TNF blocker, which actually would have increased the patient's skin cancers. But now patients who weren't able to get the right drugs are able to because of the New York step therapy law.

Following the passage of the New York step therapy law, the high success rate on appeals means office staff are less burdened and happier in their work because of the positive outcomes when they file appeals. In addition, lack of access can take a huge toll on patients because of the mental and physical impact of not having the right drug. The state law means better outcomes for many of his patients too.

But Dr. Lebwohl warns that just passing the legislation isn't enough; patients and providers must be educated to know that they still need to take action and file an exception request if confronted with step therapy. Under the state law, plans can still deny prescriptions and require step therapy. The law establishes a timely step therapy exceptions process for state-regulated plans. **He thinks it is critical that patients and providers understand the law and the process for overturning denials.**