

Dr. Chaouki Khoury

Adult & Pediatric Neurologist

Dr. Chaouki Khoury is an adult and pediatric neurologist with a private practice in Atlanta. He came to Georgia from Texas in 2019, so he has had the opportunity to experience both state step therapy reform laws in action.

He has had good experiences with both laws: in Texas, the Insurance Commissioner was engaged and Dr. Khoury found patient access to be much better as a result. In Georgia, he has found it helpful to have a patient file an exception request at the same time his office does. Dr. Khoury states “I have submitted complaints to the Georgia Office of Insurance a handful of times, but it hasn’t been an advantage. However, once the patient complains, it moves up the chain of command quickly.” He shared the story of complaining to an insurance company that a patient would suffer without a specific type of medication; the patient sent their info at the same time, and the effort was successful. He also occasionally sees less pushback from insurance plans not covered by the state law – “sometimes they abide by the Georgia law when we prescribe.”



When requesting a step therapy exception, his staff mention the Georgia law in their request, especially when the drug does not have a pediatric indication from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). He also asks his patients to file the step therapy form from the www.steptherapy.com website depending on what state they are in, given that he sees patients from all over. Because he sees both adults and pediatrics, this happens a lot for his practice. Insurance companies may push back on expensive drugs because they know the FDA indications are limited for children, “but some insurance companies are starting to come around.” If a company does not come around, he uses the form and has the patient sign it.

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But there is still more work to do. He laments that because the state laws don’t cover all insurance policies that they “don’t have enough teeth”. He is anxious for a federal law to pass. Dr. Khoury is also very concerned about the number of physicians who don’t know about step therapy reform laws. He is advocating for an education campaign to happen to help patients gain access to needed treatments.