

Chemotherapy Drug Shortages

ACCC Position:

The Association of Community Cancer Centers (ACCC) supports S. 296. ACCC believes that patients and their caregivers should have continued access to the highest quality and most appropriate treatment regimens available for each patient's specific cancer case. Unfortunately, manufacturing stoppages limit the availability of certain cancer therapies that are critical to providing quality care. Many of these drugs are made by only one or two manufacturers, so any reduction in production can create serious implications in the oncology community. In order to prevent unnecessary drug shortages, ACCC believes manufacturers should play an increased role in preventing and reporting discontinuances in production.

Issue:

The oncology community is facing a growing problem concerning the ability to access many cancer drugs, like **Leucovorin, Doxorubicin, Vincristine, Etoposide, Cisplatin, and Cytarabine**. For various reasons manufacturers suspend, or stop altogether, the manufacturing of certain drugs important to the quality treatment of cancer patients. Providers are generally not warned of the stoppages, leaving them with limited options, like altering or forgoing critical treatment regimens. The providers are also left with the responsibility of reporting these shortages to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Since many treatment regimens are time sensitive, this format increases frustration and prohibits doctors and other providers from adequately preparing for a disruption in availability.

Additional Information:

ACCC supports efforts to pass the "Preserving Access to Life-Saving Medications Act," S. 296 recently introduced by Senator Amy Klobuchar. This bill:

- Shifts shortage reporting responsibility from providers to manufacturers;
- Requires all manufacturers to report upcoming drug shortages to the FDA;
- Increases manufacturer accountability by requiring them to anticipate and notify of future manufacturing stoppages, but does not impose fines or other sanctions for reporting; and
- Allows providers to better anticipate impending shortages so both providers and patients can prepare for alterations in treatment regimens.

About ACCC:

The Association of Community Cancer Centers (ACCC) promotes the entire continuum of quality cancer care for our patients and our communities. Nearly 17,000 cancer care professionals from approximately 900 hospitals and more than 1,200 private practices are affiliated with ACCC. It is estimated that 60 percent of cancer patients nationwide are treated by a member of ACCC.