



The Patient Access Network (PAN) Foundation

Nominated by Lauren Levy, Patient Communication Specialist, The Patient Access Network (PAN) Foundation

For nearly two decades, PAN has provided a vital safety net for people who are underinsured and need financial assistance to cover their out-of-pocket costs for prescription medications. Since 2004, PAN has helped over one million patients access the medications they need. For many, the medicines prescribed by health care providers are specialty medications, often accompanied by high out-of-pocket costs. Our collaboration with the specialty pharmacy community allows us to effectively serve patients living with life-threatening, chronic and rare diseases.

We support specialty pharmacy staff and optimize operational efficiencies by providing a user-friendly pharmacy portal. Specialty pharmacies can enroll patients, review grant information, submit claims, receive electronic payments, and securely message PAN staff. PAN's application process enables staff to determine grant eligibility, enroll patients, and learn whether a patient is approved for a PAN grant, all under ten minutes. Once approved, patients can immediately use their grant. PAN's enrollment process routinely receives extraordinarily high satisfaction ratings from those we help (e.g., scores of 9.8 out of 10). When polled, 98 percent of providers said they are likely to recommend PAN to their colleagues, including other health care providers and pharmacists.

To offer holistic assistance, we provide additional services, including health insurance premium grants for certain disease programs, transportation grants to help cover transportation costs that support the patient's overall health, and referrals to nationally recognized patient advocacy organizations that provide education and support services.

Today, PAN operates over 70 disease funds, developed with input from PAN clinical specialists, its Medical Director, and members of the Board's Patient Assistance Company. Funds are approved based on multiple factors including disease prevalence, population to be served, and out-of-pocket costs. Our goal is to remove the financial barriers faced by patients, so that they can focus on their health, and not worry about affordability.

At PAN, we believe patients and healthcare professionals need quick, reliable support when accessing financial assistance for out-of-pocket medication costs. We are committed to responding to inquiries and requests for assistance in a timely and efficient manner, ensuring patients can get the help they need when they need it. This includes providing accurate information, being transparent and communicative throughout the assistance process, and ensuring interactions are handled with empathy, professionalism, and care. It is important to meet our audience where they are, so we offer multiple ways for both healthcare professionals and patients to contact us, including, secure messaging for sensitive information; a contact form on our website; and our contact center with specialists available from 9am - 5:30pm ET. Through our contact center, PAN leverages a language line service, with translation services for over 100 languages. This allows any non-English speaking healthcare professional or patient to receive the care and services they need in real time.



Outside of business hours, we direct callers to useful PAN resources. Additionally, we monitor PAN's social media daily for inquiries. Regularly, PAN measures both customer satisfaction and net promoter scores (the latter measuring one's inclination to recommend PAN to others). PAN's customer service scores consistently exceed 9.5 out of 10. PAN's Net Promoter Scores from patients who submit an application are consistently over 90. These scores are considered world class customer care.

Compassion and patience are critically important to demonstrate when providing financial assistance to seriously ill patients. When asked about their experience with PAN, patients give high praise for our contact center specialists. One patient, Vivian P., told us: "Every time I call, the representatives are kind and compassionate and knowledgeable." Another patient, Ramona B., said "They know how to handle whatever I'm calling about. They are fast, nice, and patient with me."

PAN offers financial assistance in the form of twelve-month grants for eligible patients with federal or commercial insurance, living with life-threatening, chronic, and rare diseases. These grants help with the out-of-pocket costs for their prescribed medications. Partnering with generous donors, healthcare providers, and pharmacies-including many specialty pharmacies-we provide the underinsured population access to the healthcare treatments they need and deserve. The business model we have built at PAN embraces the utmost in efficiency. Ninety-five cents of every dollar raised, directly supports patients.

PAN offers a robust reimbursement system that allows for electronic claim submissions while also supporting manual claims. Comprehensive reimbursement and claim support education is delivered through our provider and pharmacy billing guides and webpages. To streamline the process for patients, PAN eliminates the need for patients to submit for reimbursement themselves by allowing providers and pharmacies to submit claims on their behalf. This allows for direct reimbursement for pharmacies -similar to claim processing options provided by health insurance companies. However, patients still have the option to pay and be reimbursed directly if they prefer. We recognize the burden patients face when seeking treatment. That's why we are continually seeking to improve patient outcomes by building strong partnerships with their care teams (pharmacies and providers). In addition to our portals and website, PAN's team of patient support specialists support enrollments and claims inquiries. We offer webinars, trainings, online guides and quarterly newsletters to help pharmacists support their patients.

PAN partners with a broad network of patient advocacy organizations, healthcare provider and pharmacy organizations, caregiver groups, disability organizations, public health agencies, and others to raise awareness about the availability of financial assistance, connect patients with needed resources, and advocate for patient-centered policy reforms. PAN also engages in community outreach to raise awareness of the financial burdens patients with chronic or life-threatening illnesses face. By educating the public about the importance of access to healthcare and the financial challenges that patients may encounter, PAN helps build a more informed and compassionate community.

Through our advocacy efforts, we strive for legislative and regulatory change to advance health equity, lower out-of-pocket costs, reform Medicare, expand access to care for those with commercial insurance, and improve the healthcare system. We also engage individuals



in grassroots campaigns, encouraging them to send letters to Congress sharing lived experiences. We ensure patients and providers have the resources and tools needed to understand key policy issues. Following historic Medicare reforms passed as part of the Inflation Reduction Act, we committed to routinely host free webinars on key policy matters, such as Medicare reforms. We developed a Medicare reforms education hub on our website, updated regularly based on guidance from Medicare.gov. These resources help ensure patients and healthcare professionals can easily understand the reforms and how they may impact patients.

With our commitment to improving health equity for marginalized communities, we offer resources on our website, create inclusive and accessible materials, and partner with organizations, such as the National Rural Health Association and national minority provider organizations to help better provide care and resources. We also recently launched a four-part Health Equity in Action webinar series with CVS specialty to equip healthcare professionals with practical knowledge needed to advance health equity in their patient care.