

January 9, 2019

John O'Brien, PharmD, MPH
Senior Advisor for Drug Pricing Reform
Office of the Secretary
Department of Health and Human Services
Washington, DC 20201

Re: Access to affordable insulin

Dear Dr. O'Brien,

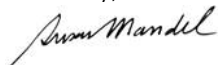
On behalf of the Endocrine Society, I would like to congratulate you on your appointment to serve as Senior Advisor to the Secretary for drug pricing reform. The Society is the world's oldest and largest organization of scientists devoted to hormone research and physicians who care for people with hormone-related conditions. Your work to achieve drug pricing reform is critical to us and the patients our members treat. Our member endocrinologists have difficult conversations every day with their patients who cannot afford the drugs needed to keep them alive or avoid complications.

Insulin, for example, is at the forefront of the debate on drug pricing as its cost has nearly tripled in the past fifteen years, making it difficult for many people to afford this medication and effectively manage their disease. This has put patient safety in jeopardy as rationing insulin is not an option. Consequently, some may opt to forgo other medical care or face difficult decisions about other living expenses. The lack of transparency in the drug supply chain has made it challenging to identify the root cause of these cost increases. The Society has developed a position statement, [Increasing Insulin Affordability](#), that identifies barriers to accessing affordable insulin and potential policy solutions that could address this growing problem.

In your role as Senior Advisor for Drug Pricing Reform, you have the opportunity to bring transparency to the way drug prices are set and work with all stakeholders to identify solutions. We urge you to consider the barriers to affordable insulin and policy recommendations laid out in our position statement as you move forward with your work.

We look forward to working with you to address rising drug costs and would welcome the opportunity to talk with you more about insulin prices. If we can be of further support, please contact Mila Becker, JD, Chief Policy Officer at mbecker@endocrine.org.

Sincerely,



Susan Mandel, MD
President, Endocrine Society