



[RunawayRx](#), a project of the California Association of Health Plans, highlights noteworthy articles and information on the acceleration of prescription drug pricing.

A recent [USA Today](#) article challenges the relationship between patient groups whose job it is to advocate for those struggling to pay six-figure price tags for medicines that improve their quality of life and the pharmaceutical companies that help fund them. While skyrocketing prices for specialty drugs are passed on to employers and consumers through higher premiums, these groups continue to remain silent on the root of the problem – the underlying prices of these medications.

Patient groups funded by drugmakers are largely mum on high drug prices



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By Jayne O'Donnell

"Drug companies provide so much of the funding for major patient groups that many critics say they've stifled a key voice in the policy debate over soaring drug prices, especially over those for cancer..."

"... 'Your insurer is still paying the full cost of the product so it's going to come back to you and be built into the premiums and cost sharing going forward,' says Leigh Purvis, director of health services research at AARP's Public Policy Institute..."

"Nearly all large companies pay their employees' health claims, and insurers simply administer the plans at the companies' direction. 'I could say that employers are distressed about high drug prices, but that's putting it too mildly,' says Leah Binder, CEO of the Leapfrog Group, which represents major employers on health care and rates hospitals..."

"We have to create public pressure to change the incentives ... for drugmakers to set prices that don't cripple people with debt... It's hard if others are taking a lot of money from pharma to know where the allies are to build momentum."

– Pat Mastors
Co-founder, Patient Voice Institute

"Drugs 'are one of the many costs' faced by cancer patients and their families, said the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society in a statement. Along with helping patients who can't afford their insurance costs, the group is beginning research comparing drug costs to their value and is urging drugmakers to share quality of life and outcomes data to support their pricing, says spokeswoman Andrea Greif..."

"'Proposing changes to prescription drug coverage without addressing the underlying price ... amounts to giving drug companies a blank check to charge whatever they want,' says Clare Krusing, spokeswoman for the insurer trade group America's Health Insurance Plans."

Read more: <http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2016/01/21/patient-groups-drug-makers-high-drug-prices/79001722/>

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The California Association of Health Plans' RunawayRx project sheds light on the acceleration of prescription drug pricing and how it impacts health care affordability, encouraging a route toward sustainable pricing. For more information, please visit www.RunawayRx.org or follow us on Twitter at [@Runaway_Rx](https://twitter.com/Runaway_Rx).