

Thank you for your support of patients and medical providers. I run a cardiology practice with one other physician in South Burlington. We provide outpatient care in our small office, as well as life saving emergency stent procedures in the setting of acute heart attacks at UVM medical center. We are the only independent providers of cardiac services in the area. UVM cardiology does a great job but it is valuable for all parties when patients have choice.

Administrative burden is one of the main limitation of our ability to care for our patients. Our staff is small and these burdens are directly on physicians and nurses. In particular prior authorizations are cumbersome and by nature designed to restrict care. We spend an increasing amount of time and resources on these issues to the point that our practice is in constant financial peril. The more time we spend fighting for patients, the less financially secure our practice is. Again, this is by design. The patients ultimately paying the price.

A commonly prescribed medication Diltiazem CD was recently denied by my patients insurance. He had been on it for years without issue. He is a young man with a busy life, but has severe genetically medicated hypertension. Initially it was difficult for the patient to understand what the issue was or was it some kind of error. He missed medications. His blood pressure went up and he ended up in the emergency room. We then saw him in our office and despite my 30 years in cardiology I am hard pressed to understand why this medication would be denied. We spent hours on the phone and sorted things out but never got a clear answer.

Any work that you can do to prevent providers not having to choose between "fighting for patients with insurance companies" versus, actually seeing patients and using our hard fought for skills to improve lives is appreciated.

Sincerely,

Dr Janet Kirwan F.A.C.C.