

February 11, 2020

The Honorable Lucy Weber, Chairwoman
The Honorable Polly Campion, Vice-Chairwoman
Committee on Health, Human Services and Elderly Affairs
107 North Main Street, LOB Room 205
Concord, NH 03301

RE: NATIONAL COMMUNITY PHARMACISTS ASSOCIATION SUPPORT OF HB 1404

Dear Representative Weber and Representative Campion,

I am writing to you today on behalf of National Community Pharmacists Association in support of HB 1404. This legislation would increase patient access to human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) pre-exposure (PrEP) medications and result in HIV related cost savings while combating the spread of the virus.

NCPA represents the interest of America's community pharmacists, including the owners of more than 21,700 independent community pharmacies across the United States and 33 independent community pharmacies in New Hampshire. These New Hampshire pharmacies filled over 1.9 million prescriptions last year, impacting the lives of thousands of patients in your state.

Ninety-one percent (91%) of Americans live within five miles of a community pharmacy.¹ More than any other segment of the pharmacy industry, independent community pharmacists are often located in the underserved rural and urban areas and are frequently the most accessible healthcare providers in many communities and are critical for the provision of immunizations and other preventive care services in the community. In addition, community pharmacists are proud to play a vital role in the New Hampshire's efforts to increase access to PrEP medications statewide. Access to pharmacy care services and HIV PrEP medications will play a critical role in combating the HIV epidemic and staving off costly downstream medical interventions.

Like other medical professions, the pharmacy profession has evolved from a dispensing and product reimbursement based industry to a profession with the *training* and patient *relationships* to provide outcomes-based services and participate in care coordination efforts.² Although we are appreciative of this legislation, to ensure patient safety, we recommend including language that would require a pharmacist training program for PrEP medications and services. The training program will aim to address the challenges and knowledge gaps, not limited to, counseling unique populations, recommending appropriate vaccinations, understanding HIV disease state, HIV medications along with how and when to exercise appropriate patient follow-up, refer the patient to necessary resources and healthcare providers.

Such a training program will optimize efforts in supporting all facets of the patient's experience relating to PrEP services and ensure a high standard of care in carrying out the responsibilities aligned with lowering the rates of HIV infection throughout the state.

¹ NCPDP Pharmacy File, ArcGIS Census Tract File, NACDS Economics Department.

² Troy Trygstad, *Payment Reform Meets Pharmacy Practice and Education Transformation*, 78 North Carolina Med. J. 3 at 173-176 (May-June 2017), available at <http://www.ncmedicaljournal.com/content/78/3/173.full.pdf+html>.

HB 1404 would increase patient access to HIV PrEP medications and aid in reducing spending related to HIV care while challenging the progression of the disease. To protect New Hampshire residents, we respectfully ask you to support HB 1404. If you have any questions about the information contained in this letter or wish to discuss the issue in greater detail, please do not hesitate to contact me at ademola.are@ncpanet.org or (703) 600-1179.

Sincerely,



Ademola Are
Manager, State Government Affairs
National Community Pharmacists Association

CC: The Honorable James Mackay, Kendall, Snow, Mary Freitas, Jerry Knirk, Jeffrey Salloway, Gerri Cannon, Frances Nutter-Upham, Richard Osborne, Joe Schapiro, Gary Woods, Charles McMahon, Bill Nelson, Joseph Guthrie, John Fothergill, William Marsh, Mark Pearson, Dennis Acton, Edward DeClercq, Walter Stapleton, Members of the New Hampshire State House of Representatives