



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF PROFESSIONAL & FINANCIAL
REGULATION
OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL
REGULATION



Janet T. Mills
Governor

Joan F. Cohen
Commissioner

May 1, 2025

Senator Donna Bailey, Senate Chair
Representative Kristi Mathieson, House Chair
Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0100

Re: L.D. 890, "An Act to Permit the Dispensing of Ivermectin Pursuant to a Standing Order upon Request for COVID-19, Flu and Cancer Patients"

Dear Senator Bailey, Representative Mathieson, and members of the Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services Committee.

I am writing to oppose LD 890 on behalf of the Office of Professional and Occupational Regulation ("OPOR"), an umbrella agency that supports the Board of Pharmacy.

LD 890 authorizes a pharmacist to dispense ivermectin, upon a patient's request and without a prescription, to treat COVID-19, influenza or cancer. The bill sets forth certain conditions including requiring a standing order and documentation.

On September 28, 2021, the Board of Pharmacy issued the Ivermectin Statement #01-2021 below:

There have been reports nationally, as well as in Maine, of an increase in the number of ivermectin prescriptions issued by health care practitioners to prevent or treat COVID-19.

IN ORDER TO PROTECT THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE BOARD REMINDS MAINE PHARMACISTS THAT:

The United States Food and Drug Administration (U.S. FDA) states that ivermectin is not authorized or approved for use in prevention or treatment of COVID-19. According to U.S. FDA, ivermectin is approved for human use to treat infections caused by some parasitic worms, head lice and skin conditions like rosacea. More information from U.S. FDA is found here: U.S. FDA Consumer Update on Ivermectin for Human Use. [Note original link no longer works. The FDA's updated 2024 guidance on ivermectin, is available at www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/ivermectin-and-covid-19]

The United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (U.S. CDC) issued a Health Alert on August 26, 2021, concerning the increased dispensing of ivermectin by retail pharmacies. The Health

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Alert states that adverse effects associated with ivermectin misuse and overdoses are increasing, as shown by a rise in calls to poison control centers reporting overdoses and more people experiencing adverse effects. More information from U.S. CDC is found here: [U.S. CDC Health Advisory, August 26, 2021](https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2021/s0826-ivermectin.html).

Pharmacists should use their professional and clinical judgment and take appropriate steps to verify with the applicable prescriber that newly issued prescriptions for ivermectin are issued for legitimate medical purposes.

The FDA updated its Ivermectin COVID -19 guidance in 2024¹. The updated guidance states:

- The FDA has not authorized or approved ivermectin for use in preventing or treating COVID-19 in humans or animals.
- The FDA has determined that currently available clinical trial data do not demonstrate that ivermectin is effective against COVID 19 in humans.
- Animal ivermectin products are different formulations than those approved for humans. Due to the lack of testing of these formulations in humans, the safety of these products in humans is not known. Never use medications intended for animals on yourself or other people.
- Taking large doses of ivermectin can be dangerous.
- From the FDA's perspective, with few exceptions, health care professionals may choose to prescribe or use an approved human drug for an unapproved use when they judge that the unapproved use is medically appropriate for an individual patient. If your health care provider writes you an ivermectin prescription, fill it through a legitimate source such as a pharmacy.

Dispensing of this medication for purposes not approved by the FDA, especially without a prescription, poses a public health and safety concern. Thank you and we would be glad to answer any questions now or at the work session.

Sincerely,



Joan Cohen
Commissioner
Department of Professional and Financial Regulation

¹ <https://www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/ivermectin-and-covid-19>

