



Karen Saylor, MD, President | Jeffrey S. Barkin, MD, President-Elect | Erik N. Steele, DO, FAAFP, Chair, Board of Directors
Andrew B. MacLean, JD, CEO | Dan Morin, Director of Communications & Government Affairs

TO: The Honorable Heather Sanborn, Chair
The Honorable Denise Tepler, Chair
Members, Joint Standing Committee Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services

FM: Dan Morin, Director of Communications and Government Affairs

DATE: April 15, 2021

RE: **Support**
LD 1293, An Act To Improve Access to Certain Injectable Medications for Treatment of
Mental Illness and Substance Use Disorder

The Maine Medical Association is the state's largest professional physician organization representing more than 4300 physicians, residents, and medical students across all clinical specialties, organizations, and practice settings.

The MMA supports LD 1293, An Act To Improve Access to Certain Injectable Medications for Treatment of Mental Illness and Substance Use Disorder.

The bill allows a pharmacist to administer certain injectable medications. We do have a suggested amendment that initial dose of medication be administered in a prescriber setting to not only provide adequate safeguards against an adverse reaction, for additional clinical reasons.

For example, medication-assisted treatment (MAT) is the use of medications to treat substance use disorder, but the standard of care is that it be combined with counseling, to provide a comprehensive treatment plan for efficiency. While the injectable Vivitrol has limited side effects, it is critical to note that it is contraindicated in those currently receiving or taking opioids. Before the first injection, a patient must be opioid free for 7-10 days. Administering Vivitrol, and its opioid blocking mechanism on certain patients can result in serious health consequences such as overdose, coma or death. If the patient is currently using opioids, it can also cause severe and serious withdrawal after the fact.

To address concerns with administering the initial dose of certain injectable medications we recommend codifying that the initial dose should not be administered in a pharmacy setting. The MMA would support the bill if such an amendment was made to the legislation.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.