



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

2 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0002
(207) 287-1400
TTY: MAINE RELAY 711

Sam Zager

90 Prospect Street
Portland, ME 04103
Residence: (207) 400 - 6846
Sam.Zager@legislature.maine.gov

Introducing

LD 223, Resolve, Directing the Department of Health and Human Services to Amend Its Rules Regarding Pharmacy Services

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Senator Baldacci, Representative Meyer and my esteemed colleagues of the Health and Human Services Committee, I am here today to introduce **LD 223, Resolve, Directing the Department of Health and Human Services to Amend Its Rules Regarding Pharmacy Services** .

This is important to me because I've seen in clinical practice countless times how pharmacists play key roles as part of the healthcare team. They work with prescribers and patients to strike the right balance between benefit and risk of medications; they counsel patients about how to take medications; and they often reduce financial and other barriers that can threaten otherwise effective treatment plans; and they sometimes compound or formulate specialty medicines, such as those used in certain types of chemotherapy. I am introducing this resolve today because I always seek ways to improve equitable and overall access to high quality low-cost healthcare--and access to pharmacy consultation is part of that.

The RESOLVE before you today is divided into two sections:

1) Allows for Reimbursement for Pharmacists to Provide Medication Evaluation/Consultation via telehealth

Sec. 1: Requires the Department of Health and Human Services to amend its rules in Chapter 101: MaineCare Benefits Manual, Chapters II and III, Sections 19, 40 and 96 and Chapter 5: Office of Aging and Disability Services Policy Manual, Section 63 in order to allow for reimbursement for a pharmacist licensed under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 32, chapter 117 to provide medication evaluation or consultation to a MaineCare member via telehealth or in a home visit when technology is not the most effective mode of consultation.

2) Report Regarding Implementation

Sec. 2. Requires the Department of Health and Human Services' Office of MaineCare Services to report regarding the implementation of this legislation to this committee. The report must be submitted no later than December 5, 2024. The committee may report out

legislation to modify the rules amended pursuant to section 1 to the 132nd Legislature in 2025.

There are several providers that will come before you today who will speak to the significance of this RESOLVE. You will hear expert testimony regarding

1. how medication management can be a major challenge for older patients, patients with disabilities; as well as their families,
2. how a pharmacist would perform medication reviews based on a patient's health history to evaluate the appropriateness, safety, benefits, and risks of the patient's medication; and
3. the expected collaboration between the pharmacist and the primary care provider or specialists to make recommendations on medications that can be discontinued, side effects and medication alternatives that may be more effective.

The RESOLVE allows the flexibility for this service to be delivered during an in-person visit or by telehealth (when appropriate) to ensure we are able to effectively reach in-home patients in a timely manner.

The pharmacist consultation and medication management proposed in this bill goes a long way in protecting our constituents choosing to receive care in the home and reducing hospitalizations due to (preventable) medication complications.

I look forward to working with all of you on this important legislation and ask for your support.