

MaineHealth Local Health Systems

Franklin Community
Health Network
LincolnHealth
MaineHealth Care At Home
Maine Behavioral Healthcare
Memorial Hospital
Maine Medical Center
NorDx
Pen Bay Medical Center
Southern Maine Health Care
Synernet
Waldo County General Hospital
Western Maine Health

Part of the MaineHealth Family

MaineHealth Accountable
Care Organization

MaineHealth Affiliates

MaineGeneral Health
Mid Coast-Parkview Health
New England Rehabilitation
Hospital of Portland
St. Mary's Health System

Testimony of Brian Marden, Pharm.D. In Support of LD 998, “An Act to Amend the Continuing Education Requirement for Pharmacists.” Thursday, April 1, 2021

Senator Sanborn, Representative Tepler, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services, I am Brian Marden, Chief Pharmacy Officer at MaineHealth, and I am here to testify in support of LD 998, “An Act To Amend the Continuing Education Requirement for Pharmacists.”

MaineHealth is Maine’s largest integrated non-profit health care system that provides a continuum of health care services to the residents of eleven counties in Maine and one in New Hampshire. Our scope of services range from primary and specialty physician services to behavioral health care and community and tertiary hospital care, home health care and a lab.

In 2009, Maine became the 50th state to allow pharmacists to start administering immunizations, starting with the influenza vaccine. Since then, Maine has passed additional legislation to expand the scope of vaccines allowed and to whom they can be administered. Allowing pharmacists to administer immunizations in Maine continues to be a major public health advantage, especially with the very recent effort to provide access to the available Covid-19 vaccines. To become authorized to administer immunizations, a pharmacist must possess a certificate of administration issued by the Maine Board of Pharmacy. Such certification requires significant pre-requisite training requirements.

With the original legislation in 2009, there was language passed that changed the Continuing Pharmacy Education annual renewal license requirements for all pharmacists seeking license renewal. This language mandated that “Of the 15 hours to be completed, at least 2 hours must be in board-approved courses on drug administration ...” Therefore, since 2009 all pharmacists seeking licensure renewal in Maine have had to complete 2 hours of continuing education annually on “drug administration.”

LD 998 does NOT in any way aim to reduce or change the current landscape that allows for pharmacists to administer immunizations in Maine. This bill simply removes the annual 2 hour continuing education requirement for those pharmacists that are not certified in Maine to administer drugs and immunizations,” while still requiring it for pharmacists that are certified. This appropriately aligns “drug administration” continuing education statutory requirements with those pharmacists who have certification to do so.

With this, I ask the committee to vote Ought to Pass on LD 998. Thank you for your time and for the opportunity to speak with you today and I look forward to responding to any questions that you may have.