

State of Maine | 131st Legislature
Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services
Testimony of Hannah A. Hudson on behalf of Maine Primary Care Association
February 15, 2023

Supporting:

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

Sponsored by Representative Zager

Senator Baldacci, Representative Meyer, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services, I am Hannah Hudson, Policy and Communications Manager at Maine Primary Care Association (MPCA).

MPCA is a membership organization that includes all of Maine's 20 Community Health Centers (CHCs), also known as Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). Maine's CHCs make up the largest independent primary care network in the state, providing high quality and equitable primary and preventive medical, behavioral, and dental health services for over 200,000 people (1 in 6 Mainers) at more than 70 service delivery sites in all 16 Maine counties.

MPCA is supportive of this legislation because providing access to pharmacy services and affordable medications is a key component in Community Health Centers' comprehensive care model. We encourage the Committee to ensure that these services are available to CHCs in the final legislation. Our team would be happy to work with Committee and staff prior to and during the work session.

As our health system continues to be impacted by provider shortages, making pharmacist telehealth appointments and home visits reimbursable will have an immediate benefit. As an example, Penobscot Community Health Care, a larger CHC with an in-house pharmacy, currently utilizes a collaborative care model that brings pharmacists and clinicians together to directly benefit patients. In this model, pharmacists frequently communicate with the full care team, meet daily with patients to provide education, and regularly review medication plans.

Unfortunately, lack of reimbursement has been an inhibiting factor for CHCs that want to fully utilize the potential of pharmacists in their care team approach.¹ This bill would help alleviate that barrier and allow for more patients to access the care they deserve.

On behalf of Maine's Community Health Centers, thank you for considering our comments. Please do not hesitate to contact me directly at hhudson@mepca.org with any follow up questions.

Hannah A. Hudson, MA
Policy and Communications Manager, MPCA

¹ [Pharmacists in Federally Qualified Health Centers: Models of Care to Improve Chronic Disease](#)