



CONTINUATION OF PHARMACY IMMUNIZATION AND TESTING AUTHORITIES

BILL NUMBER: [HF1197](#) and [SF1176](#)

PURPOSE OF BILL: Continue to allow pharmacists, pharmacy interns, and pharmacy technicians to immunize and help patients with testing by maintaining authorities granted to under the Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness (PREP) Act. This legislation would permanently allow pharmacists, pharmacy interns, and pharmacy technicians licensed by the Minnesota Board of Pharmacy to immunize Minnesotans 3 years and older as well as order and administer CLIA waived Point-of-Care (POC) patient tests.

SIGNIFICANCE:

If the bill is to pass, the following would occur:

- Ability to order CLIA waived tests and independently order immunizations without a collaborative practice agreement (CPA).*
- Pharmacy technicians will be able to immunize with proper training.
- Pharmacists will be able to order CLIA waived tests (such as blood glucose tests and rapid strep tests).
- Immunization age reduced to 3 years and older.

HF1197 and SF1176 seek to make sure patients can access these services at their community pharmacy now and after the pandemic is over.

KEY POINTS:

- **THE PHARMACY PROFESSION STEPPED UP!** More than 4 million (57%) COVID-19 vaccine doses have been administered by a Minnesota pharmacist, a pharmacy technician, or pharmacy intern.¹ Of this 4 million, 38% of these were administered by a pharmacy technician. Minnesotans have recognized the significant impact that pharmacy teams have on public health, especially over the last two years. Pharmacies are also continuing to provide testing services. Pharmacists are providing critical health services to patients every day and are seeking to continue to provide these services long after the pandemic.
- **EXPANDING PATIENT ACCESS TO CARE - VACCINATIONS:** Pharmacists have the necessary training, resources, and clinical decision-making skills to offer effective vaccine services to individuals 3 years and older. Access to information systems such as the Minnesota Immunization Information Connection (MIIC) and ability to refer patients to primary care providers will ensure that patients receive comprehensive and ongoing healthcare services. As of early 2023, Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) vaccines for pregnant women and seniors are close to approval, this emphasizes the significance and the need for all members of the pharmacy team in providing access to these vaccines.
- **A GREATER FOCUS ON TEAMWORK IN THE PROFESSION:** Allowing pharmacy technicians and interns to administer vaccines after receiving authorized training and under the direct supervision of a pharmacist will improve efficiency and safety within pharmacies. By delegating the task of vaccine administration to trained technicians and interns, pharmacists can focus on other clinical tasks such as dispensing preparation, patient care, and patient education. The PREP Act declaration in 2021 provides this opportunity and ensures that the best care is provided to patients.
- **EXPANDING PATIENT ACCESS TO CARE - POC TESTING:** POC testing involves performing a diagnostic test outside of a laboratory that produces a rapid and reliable result. This can help identify earlier diagnoses and access to treatment - which can be lifesaving! By offering CLIA-waived tests, pharmacies can expand access to diagnostic services, improve patient outcomes, and support the overall healthcare system. These tests are considered to be simple and low-risk, and can be performed by pharmacists or pharmacy technicians without

the need for specialized laboratory equipment. CLIA-waived tests would only be used for specific, well-defined purposes as determined by regulations and professional standards.

***Pharmacist independent ordering authority for immunizations**

- By law, pharmacy personnel are required to adhere to [ACIP guidelines](#) (which make up the collaborative practice agreements pharmacists currently use in MN). In a practical sense, the only thing that changes is the lack of a physician signature on the bottom of the ACIP guided CPA document.

TESTING OPTIONS AT THE POINT-OF-CARE

Acute Infectious Testing:

CLIA-waived tests can be used to diagnose conditions such as streptococcal pharyngitis (strep throat) or influenza, providing rapid results to patients.

- Strep A: Only 10-15% of adults with acute pharyngitis—a sore throat—test positive for strep, yet up to 75% are prescribed antibiotics. The majority of pharyngitis cases are viral and self-limiting in nature and could be symptomatically treated with OTC products. Combating antibiotic resistance should be a priority for all pharmacists. Tests available by: [BD*](#), [Quidel*](#), [Roche](#)
- Influenza: Causes 12,000-50,000 deaths annually in the United States. Rapid testing for influenza A and B allows for accurate and timely treatment, as patients only have a 48-hour window to receive critical antiviral therapy. Tests available by: [BD*](#), [Quidel*](#), [Alere](#)

Chronic Disease Screening

CLIA-waived tests can help detect the presence of specific substances in the blood or urine, such as glucose or protein, and provide an early indication of potential chronic conditions, such as HIV, hyperlipidemia, or hepatitis C.

- HIV: There are an estimated 200,000 undiagnosed HIV-infected individuals in the United States². It is recommended that anyone who is sexually active or engages in high risk behavior consider screening. Tests available by: [OraSure](#), [BioLytical](#)
- Lipids: 12% of Americans have undiagnosed dyslipidemia. Cholesterol screenings allow pharmacists to identify patients who would benefit from statin therapy. Tests available by: [Alere](#), [pts Diagnostics](#)
- Hepatitis C: Of the 3.5 million people infected with HCV in the United States, about half are unaware they have the virus. It is recommended that all persons born between 1945 and 1965 be screened. Tests available by: [OraSure](#)

Chronic Disease Monitoring

CLIA-waived tests can provide individuals with regular and convenient access to testing for conditions such as diabetes, enabling patients to closely monitor their condition and adjust their treatment plan as needed.

- A1c: Just over half of the 29 million Americans with diabetes achieved an A1c < 7.0% in recent years. Monitoring patient values may help direct counseling and therapeutic management to improve glycemic control. Tests available by: [pts Diagnostics](#)

Statistics reported from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). A comprehensive list of CLIA-waived tests is available at the U.S. Food & Drug Administration website. A list of available CLIA-waived testing manufacturers and CPT codes is provided at the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid website.

1. Minnesota Department of Health, COVID-19 Vaccine Data, Doses Administered by Providers.
<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/stats/vaccine.html#sum>