LEGISLATIVE UPDATE: CONTACT YOUR LEGISLATORS TODAY!

The TPA, TSSP, and TSHP Winter Meetings and the Community Pharmacy Workshop, all held earlier this week, were incredibly successful due to the participation and engagement of our members, attendees, sponsors, and exhibitors! Thanks so much to all of our incredible meeting participants for showing up, speaking up, and advocating as one voice to move patient care and the pharmacy profession “forward together”!

The high level of engagement by pharmacy advocates during the meetings, Legislative Reception, and Pharmacy Day on the Hill resulted in the advancement of several key pharmacy initiatives and demonstrated the true power of grassroots pharmacy advocacy.

But there is still work to be done, and we need your help today! Below is a brief overview of upcoming action items and recent events at the state level:

Pharmacists as Providers

Recent Actions: SB 0461 was passed by the Senate Commerce and Labor Committee on 2/28/2017, and HB 0405 was passed by the House Insurance and Banking Subcommittee on 3/1/2017.

HB 0405 (bit.ly/2m4pKvE) by Terry, Sexton C / SB 0461 (bit.ly/2mPqTqX) by Bell, Haile, Crowe

Description: This legislation expands current code to include pharmacists in the list of classes of providers which managed health insurance issuers are prohibited from discriminating against for inclusion in medical provider networks, including pharmacists’ participation, referral, reimbursement of covered services or indemnification, solely on the basis of their license or certification, if such providers are acting within the scope of their license or certification.

ACTION NEEDED TODAY!

- Monday, March 6, 2017 - SB 0461 will be voted upon by all Senators on the Senate Floor.
- Tuesday, March 7, 2017 - HB 0405 will be voted upon by the House Insurance and Banking Committee.
- Easy Ways to Contact Your Legislators (bit.ly/2LLEj7n):
  - Call Your Legislators
  - Send Your Legislators an Email using T-PLAN’s easy automated process (bit.ly/1NuOWAr)
  - Contact Your Legislators Through Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)

“Why Am I Not Getting Email from TPA?”

Rarely does a week go by that TPA doesn’t email members with information you might not see anywhere else. If you’re a TPA member and are not receiving email from TPA, let us help you! If none of the following suggestions works for you, or if you’re not sure how to try them, please give us a call at 615-256-3023, and let us help you personally.

- Add communications@tnpharm.org to your Contact list or Address Book.
- Make sure we have your correct email address. Please send your current email address to tpa@tnpharm.org or call us at 615-256-3023.
- Check your Spam or Junk folder, and if you find our messages there, add the tnpharm.org domain to your “Whitelist” (also called an “Approved Sender” or “Safe Sender” list). Instructions for several email services and platforms can be found at www.whatcounts.com/how-to-whitelist-emails.
- If you’re using Gmail, see if TPA’s messages are going under your Promotions or Social tab. If so, left-click and hold one of the misfiled TPA messages, drag it over to the Primary tab, and release the mouse button. After it is dropped, click Yes when asked if you wish to make the change permanent.
- If you’re using corporate or university email, an internal firewall may be prohibiting TPA’s messages from being delivered to you. Your server administrator or IT department may be able to help you.

MORE ON PAGE 2...
Professional Privilege Tax Repeal or Reduction

Recent Actions: SB 0392 cleared an important hurdle this week and received a favorable recommendation from the Senate Finance, Ways, and Means Revenue Subcommittee.


• Description: As introduced, phases out the professional privilege tax over a five-year period for tax years that begin on and after June 1, 2017. Go to bit.ly/2m5prm9 to view the Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (TACIR) study regarding the professional privilege tax in Tennessee.

• Other Legislation: 6 additional bills filed (bit.ly/2m5fhLr)

ACTION NEEDED TODAY!

• SB 0132 will be voted upon by the Senate Finance, Ways, and Means Committee on Tuesday, March 7, 2017.
• Easy Ways to Contact Your Legislators (bit.ly/2LLEj7n):
  • Call Your Legislators
  • Send Your Legislators an Email
  • Contact Your Legislators Through Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)

Direct and Indirect Remuneration (DIR) Restrictions and Pharmacy Benefits Managers (PBM) Registration

Recent Actions: TPA staff and members provided testimony to the Senate Investigations and Oversight Committee on February 14, 2017, regarding DIR and its impact on patients and pharmacy practice. To view a video recording of this testimony, go to bit.ly/2WtBHq5.

HB 0569 (bit.ly/2m5tiZC) by Powers, Sexton C / SB 0392 by Haile, Dickerson (bit.ly/2m4nXGV)

• Description: As introduced, prohibits certain direct and indirect charges to a pharmacist by ork, or the pharmacy has an ownership interest in the pharmacy benefits manger.

ACTION NEEDED TODAY!

• Continue to talk with your legislators about DIR fees and their impact on your patients and your pharmacy practices.

Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention and Treatment Donation Program

Recent Actions: TPA, along with the Tennessee Board of Pharmacy, East Tennessee State University College of Public Health, and University of Tennessee Memphis Center for Addiction Science, provided testimony to the House Ad Hoc Taskforce on Opioid Abuse on Thursday, March 2, 2017. To view this testimony, go to bit.ly/2GGnzxa.
• Multiple Controlled Substance bills Introduced (bit.ly/2m4uMZg)
• Many Issues Being Discussed:
  • Closing loopholes in Prescription Safety Act
  • Increasing the effectiveness and usefulness of the Controlled Substance Monitoring Database (CSMD)
  • Addressing regulations and enforcement for pain management clinics and suboxone clinics
  • Addressing the gaps in patient access to addiction treatment options
  • Addressing criminal penalties for illicit drug manufacturing, unlawful distribution, and illegal possession of fentanyl and its derivatives
  • Enhancing penalties for illegal activities related to controlled substances (i.e., pharmacy robberies)