

February 4, 2019
Cc: Representative David Benson



Dear Chairwoman Landwehr,

On behalf of myself, as a pharmacist that lives in Overland Park, I write this letter to encourage you to support HB2082. This bill would allow state-licensed pharmacists to administer injectable medications to patients pursuant to a prescription order. Currently, immunization-certified pharmacists in Kansas are trained to administer vaccines, but not medications, under protocol with a physician, allowing better access to patients who may otherwise not have been able to adhere to public health recommendations. There is a need for increased access to medication administration services for many types of medications and 90% of Kansas residents live within two miles of a pharmacy. In addition to medication expertise, I believe pharmacists in Kansas can alleviate many of the geographical barriers that challenge clinicians and patients if pharmacists are allowed to administer injectable medications to patients.

According to the National Alliance of State Pharmacy Associations (NASPA), pharmacists across the country are able to provide medication administration services in 40 states. However, the lack of medication administration privileges given to pharmacists in the state of Kansas prevents us from providing appropriate care to our patients. Personally, I have experienced this barrier when attempting to assist one of my own patients in our community. This patient, a gentleman in his late sixties, was prescribed Vitamin B12 intramuscular injections by his physician for the treatment of a vitamin deficiency. Due to a light tremor, limited dexterity, vision problems, and a fear of needles, the idea of an injection was a terrifying concept for him. In addition, this patient lacked adequate experience with drawing up the medication and manipulating the needle. Unfortunately, due to the current policy in place on medication administration, my ability to provide optimal care to this patient remains limited. This patient continues to schedule monthly appointments with me at the pharmacy so I may assist him with drawing up the correct dosage from the vial into a syringe, appropriate sanitation and preparation of the injection site, and coaching of appropriate injection technique. While I have done my best to educate and instruct the patient throughout the process, I am unable to ease his discomfort by relieving him of the burden of self-administering the dose.

My patient serves as just one example to support the need for this bill in our community. Pharmacy-based medication administration services can improve public health by providing patient care, facilitating access to needed services, and enhancing collaboration with other health care providers. Patients who could benefit from medication administration services often encounter challenges, such as inability to coordinate scheduling with providers, missed medication doses, and limited knowledge of the medication or its administration. However, if pharmacists were able to administer medications, we could provide appropriate patient education, decrease the risk of harm caused by incorrect administration, and address barriers to adherence.

The goal of HB2082 is to expand access to medication administration services. As evidenced above, this would be beneficial not only to rural parts of the state, but, urban areas as well. Support of legislation to expand medication administration capabilities among pharmacists provides the opportunity to improve medication safety and adherence. I truly appreciate you doing your part to pass this important legislation that will positively impact the lives of patients in our community.

Sincerely,
Mary Beth Seipel, PharmD