

Testimony to the New York State Senate and Assembly Joint Higher Education Budget Hearing

Submitted by:

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**Thank you for the opportunity to comment.**

**I am a pharmacist who was honored and privileged to serve as the Executive Secretary of this State's Board of Pharmacy for approximately 29 years. I continue my connection with the profession as an adjunct faculty member at two colleges of pharmacy. I am also certified to administer immunizations. However, and though I have been involved in health care for some 50 years, I appear today as a concerned citizen.**

**Specifically, I wish to support, in the strongest terms, Governor Cuomo's inclusion of the provisions in S2507/A3007 in the proposed budget.**

**In 2008 I was privileged to assist in implementation of the law allowing pharmacists in New York State to administer influenza and pneumococcal vaccinations. At the time, all other states had allowed such practices except Maine. Amendments to the law have added other immunizing agents to the list that our pharmacists can administer, but the reality is that, again, pharmacists in 48 other states are able to provide more services to their patients. The inclusion of the referenced language will allow New York's pharmacists to administer every CDC recommended vaccination to adult patients.**

**Our current fight against the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the critical role our pharmacists make in delivering vaccinations. It is likely that in the coming months our NYS pharmacists will deliver COVID vaccines to untold patients in every demographic. Certainly, our community-based pharmacists can and will assure access to the those populations that might otherwise be under-served.**

**Our concern should extend beyond COVID, however. Patients have proven that they welcome the opportunity to obtain critical immunizations from their pharmacists. In the future, with the proposed amendments as a reality, our pharmacists will play an ever-increasing role in deterring morbidity and mortality from preventable illnesses. It is my personal experience that our patients often seek pharmacists' opinions regarding their fears of vaccinations. My profession can go far in dispelling the misinformation distributed by "anti-vaxxers".**

**I would definitely be remiss if I did not also take this opportunity to underscore my support and appreciation of the governor's inclusion of expanded Collaborative Drug Therapy Management (CDTM) in the budget. As the name indicates, this is a pharmacist/physician relationship designed to optimize medication outcomes from both an effectiveness and a safety standpoint. I wholeheartedly support and appreciate the inclusion of CDTM expansion in the budget. This team-based approach to patient-centered care has repeatedly demonstrated better therapeutic outcomes and reduced adverse reactions that ultimately translate into significant cost savings. By expansion of this program in New York State the opportunity to receive state of the art pharmaceutical care will now be available for all of our residents.**

**Thank you.**