



House Committee on Financial Institutions and Insurance
Testimony submitted by Mike Larkin
Kansas Pharmacists Association, Topeka Kansas
February 18, 2015

Chairman Schwab and Members of the Committee:

My name is Mike Larkin, and I am the Executive Director of the Kansas Pharmacists Association. The Kansas Pharmacists Association is the statewide professional association in Kansas that represents Kansas pharmacists from all practice settings. Thank you for allowing me to present testimony today on House Bill 2176.

A major driver of rising health care expenditures is the cost associated with treating chronic illnesses. For many of these chronic illnesses, medications are the most cost-effective treatment, and yet patients routinely miss doses. Medication synchronization is increasingly being recognized as a tool that can improve adherence when patients are on a regular chronic medication regimen. It refers to the process of a pharmacy coordinating all of a patient's chronic prescription medications to be filled on the same date each month. Here are some facts to consider:

- Many patients fail to refill a prescription, or stop taking medications without consulting a health care professional.
- Poor medication adherence leads to more frequent hospitalizations, poorer health, higher healthcare costs (up to \$290 billion per year), and increased risk of death.
- Pharmacists facilitate a critical role to ensuring proper and timely use of medications and medication adherence.
- An emerging opportunity for pharmacists to help increase proper medication use and increase adherence, while improving pharmacy efficiency, is medication synchronization.
- Medication Synchronization can streamline prescription refills for pharmacists, providers, and patients allowing patients to fill all of their medications on the same day each month.
- Medication Synchronization also improves patient safety. Many people with chronic health problems and the elderly have mobility issues that limit their trips to the pharmacy.
- By filling all of their prescriptions at the same time each month, it makes it more convenient for them to pick up their medicine and reduces the risk they will go off their medications because they have run out.

There are several barriers to medication synchronization. When attempting to synchronize a patient's medications, some prescriptions are deemed "refill too soon" by the insurer or third

party. Some insurers allow only 1 claim per 30 day period, making it difficult to synchronize medications. Another issue is that patients are often charged a full month's co pay for just a partial fill to synchronize their medications. Several states are addressing these issues with legislation. Connecticut passed legislation in 2013, and over 10 other states have active legislation, including Missouri. HB 2176 would:

- Allow for a prorated daily cost-sharing right to prescriptions that are dispensed for less than a 30 day supply when it is in the best interest of the patient.
- Prohibit denial of such coverage or prorated dispensing fees
- Give authority to the Kansas Insurance Commissioner to oversee and enforce this statute.

Medication synchronization increases medication adherence and will benefit Kansas patients by keeping required medications more easily accessible to patients.

I appreciate the opportunity to discuss some practical suggestions regarding pharmacy pricing in Kansas. Thank you for allowing me to submit this testimony. Please feel free to contact me at 785-228-2327 any time if you have questions.



Mike Larkin
Executive Director
Kansas Pharmacists Association