



Support HF 2503/SF 2459 to Expand Access to Affordable, Quality Patient Care for Minnesotans

On behalf of our members operating approximately 900 pharmacies in Minnesota, we ask you to support HF 2503/SF 2459. **We applaud the authors for recognizing the impact of expanding access to affordable patient care by providing coverage for pharmacist-provided services.**

Pharmacies were on the frontline of the state and national response to the COVID-19 pandemic and proved they can provide widespread patient-driven. State and federal efforts that empowered pharmacies during the pandemic resulted in greatly increased access to health care in urban and outstate communities. **Passage of this bill would implement a sustainable and equitable coverage model by expanding coverage within networks to include pharmacy care.** Minnesotans would have more patient-driven options with increased access to convenient and affordable care in their own neighborhoods.

With nearly 90% of Americans living within 5 miles of a community pharmacy, pharmacies are often the most readily accessible healthcare provider. **One of the lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic is that pharmacies can reach your constituents in medically underserved areas.** This is especially significant in Minnesota where 1.07 million people live in primary care professional shortage areas.

Minnesotans have benefitted from, and now expect, expanded access to a wide variety of important and affordable healthcare services, including screenings, point-of-care testing, immunizations, chronic disease management programs, and more. Pharmacies already offer these services in neighborhoods and can help keep people healthier and reduce costs. However, ensuring adequate coverage and reimbursement for services is necessary to sustain the model beyond the pandemic. **HF 2503/SF 2459 would provide improved patient access and choice, while ensuring the model can be sustained when the Public Health Emergency ends on May 11.**

By supporting this bill, the Legislature can permanently expand Minnesotans' healthcare access and positively impact health disparities in outstate and urban areas, while simultaneously incentivizing affordable care through market competition. We urge the Committee to approve HF 2503/SF 2459 to maintain patient choice and access to pharmacy services, affordable patient care.