

The Honorable Shannon Jones  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, 1st Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Senator Jones,

I am writing to you in support of Senate Bill 141, the pharmacist consult agreement legislation. I am a Hematology/ Medical Oncology physician at Akron General Medical Center who specializes in Palliative Care, including pain management. My pain management practice cares for patients with malignant and nonmalignant chronic pain. I use an interdisciplinary approach to manage these patients.

Our pain management team consists of three pharmacists, two physicians, and a nurse practitioner who work very closely together to optimize therapeutic regimens, while minimizing adverse effects. Due to the nature of our specialty, we often times are required to use controlled substances. The potential risks associated with controlled substances require extra monitoring to ensure proper use including intense patient education, regular monitoring of the OARRS database, pill counts, and random urine toxicology screenings. In our current practice setting the pharmacists provide the majority of the above listed monitoring prior to and during patient visits. As pain management specialists, my pharmacists are skilled in the safe and effective use of opioids in our patient population. Given their extensive training and experience working with these medications, I utilize my pharmacists, to help design and implement pain regimens, including controlled substances. Our current practice model provides very safe and effective patient care.

The pharmacists also manage telephone calls from patients, their outpatient pharmacies, insurance companies, and other physicians' offices. Throughout all of the office and telephone interactions, patients are very comfortable interacting with the pharmacists. Patients value their expertise when it comes to the medications they are taking. They are asked questions not only regarding pain medications, but medications a primary care giver or specialist is prescribing.

The current Ohio Collaborative Drug Therapy Management or consult agreement statute (ORC 4729.39) significantly hampers the ability of the pharmacist to effectively assist patients in reaching their healthcare goals. The changes in the statute being considered would ensure that patients receive the safest, most effective medicines to treat their conditions and support compliance with drug therapies. It is important to point out that, compared to other prescribing members of the healthcare team; pharmacists receive more formal education and training on the safe and effective use of medications. This bill, if signed into law, will help pharmacists improve patient care for all Ohioans.

Sincerely,



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