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Proponent testimony HB 214

Ohio house health committee

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Good morning chairman lips, vice chair Manning and ranking member west  And members of the Ohio house health committee thank you for taking the time to hear my testimony on Hb 214  Ohio’s accessible prescription Reader plan

Like many other residents in the great state of Ohio I take prescription medication on a daily basis. In the spring of 2014 an innocent mistake almost cost me my life. I was taking a well-known antidepressant and was being monitored closely by my primary physician. After I’ve been on the medication for a while we decided to increase my dose from 20 mg per day to 40 mg per day. according to my doctor  this medication was only available in 20 mg capsules. According to my doctors directions I now took two 20mg capsules per day. I went along with this dose until March when I again met with my doctor and we upped the dose one more time. She now adjusted my daily dose to 80 mg per day. I went to the pharmacy, filled my prescription as usual and went home. Still believing this medication was only available in 20 mg capsules I started taking four capsules per day.

 Within a couple of days of this medication increase I started to become very ill. No matter what I tried I could not sleep. I began to have serious abdominal pains nausea, and vomiting. After five days with no sleep and my symptoms only getting worse, I started having multiple seizures and auditory hallucinations. After my fourth seizure of the day my husband called 911. I was taken to the hospital and my husband had the good sense to get my medications. I was diagnosed by the emergency room department as having serotonin syndrome. When the medication does changed from 20 mg per Day to 40 mg per day unbeknownst to my doctor and myself the pharmacist gave me a 40 mg tablet and didn’t tell me. By the time I got to the hospital and they gave me the diagnosis of serotonin syndrome I had been taking 160 mg per day of this medication and the highest recommended dose was 80 mg per day.

Had I had some form of accessible prescription reader I would have been able to double check my prescription labels independently and I would’ve caught this mistake much earlier before it became so severe.

I pride myself on being a very independent person. Help me keep my dignity and my independence by voting in favor of HB to 14 Ohio’s prescription drug reader program.

Respectfully submitted,

Heather Leiterman