



# Board of Nursing

Larry Hogan, Governor · Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor · Dennis R. Schrader, Secretary

February 10, 2022

The Honorable Paul G. Pinsky  
Chair, Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee  
2 West, Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

**RE: SB 355 – HIV Prevention Drugs – Prescribing and Dispensing by Pharmacists and Insurance Requirements – Letter of Information**

Dear Chair Pinsky and Committee Members:

The Maryland Board of Nursing (the Board) respectfully submits this letter of information for Senate Bill (SB) 355 – HIV Prevention Drugs – Prescribing and Dispensing by Pharmacists and Insurance Requirements. This bill authorizes pharmacists to prescribe and dispense pre-exposure prophylaxis and post-exposure prophylaxis for HIV prevention to patients under certain circumstances. This bill requires the Maryland Medical Assistance Program to provide drugs that are approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for HIV prevention.

The Board believes it is necessary to expand access to prophylaxis medications for HIV prevention to individuals who are truly in need of this service. The Board, however, is not in favor of restricting certain practitioners, by way of additional training or administrative burden, from prescribing these medications. The pandemic has placed incredible limitations on healthcare practitioners' ability to provide adequate and timely care. Patients are unable to receive expeditious treatment, and, in turn, their illnesses are left aggravated. There has, however, been a collective response by the legislature related to expanding certain scopes of practice to address the current obstacles in the healthcare field.

The Board believes pharmacists are educationally prepared and competent to prescribe and dispense prophylaxis medications for HIV prevention. To practice in Maryland, pharmacists must: (1) complete a rigorous four-to-six year education and residency program; (2) successfully pass the national certification test; and (3) obtain a license in good standing from the Board of Pharmacy. Pharmacists are noted to be one of the most readily accessible healthcare practitioners in the community. Most Marylanders live within a few minutes' walk or drive of a pharmacy. Additionally, individuals often do not need an appointment to consult a pharmacist on their prescribed medication. The Board of Nursing respectfully defers to the Board of Pharmacy for their thoughts and expertise.

For the reasons discussed above, the Board of Nursing respectfully submits this letter of information for SB 355.

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I hope this information is useful. For more information, please contact Iman Farid, Health Policy Analyst, at (410) 585 – 1536 ([iman.farid@maryland.gov](mailto:iman.farid@maryland.gov)) or Rhonda Scott, Deputy Director, at (410) 585 – 1953 ([rhonda.scott2@maryland.gov](mailto:rhonda.scott2@maryland.gov)).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. Hicks", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the left.

Gary N. Hicks  
Board President

**The opinion of the Board expressed in this document does not necessarily reflect that of the Department of Health or the Administration.**