



PHARMACEUTICAL CARE MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

Mark Merritt
President & CEO

April 22, 2010

The Honorable Edolphus Towns
Chairman
House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
2157 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

On behalf of the Pharmaceutical Care Management Association (PCMA), I am writing to express opposition to the U.S. Postal Service's (USPS) proposal to reduce home delivery of mail to five days from six. PCMA is the national association representing America's pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs), which administer prescription drug plans for more than 210 million Americans with health coverage provided through Fortune 500 employers, health insurers, labor unions, and Medicare.

PCMA's member companies also operate mail-service pharmacies, which consumers rely on for convenience and value. Our members' mail-service pharmacies ship hundreds of millions of prescriptions each year via the USPS, predominantly to the chronically ill, the elderly, and those in rural areas.

While we understand that the Postal Service has proposed realigning its services with the changing use of the mail, mail delivery of prescription drugs is a growing part of the USPS's business. As more Americans look to home delivery of their prescriptions as a way to save money, this proportion will continue to grow.

Intentionally delaying mail, even by one day, would cause a potential gap in care when a refill has not arrived in time. For a patient needing a drug on Saturday, a wait until Monday's mail, regardless of the reason, is not acceptable. This problem is compounded by the fact that many federal holidays are on Mondays, so that there would often be a four-day wait – from Friday until Tuesday – for a person to receive a prescription that had been delayed in the mail and missed the Friday delivery.

Surveys show that recipients of prescription drugs by mail – a majority of which are delivered by the USPS – are highly satisfied with mail-service pharmacies, as they are convenient, safe, and save consumers money. Mail-service pharmacies not only save money on prescription drugs, but peer-reviewed research has demonstrated that their use can increase adherence to drug regimens for the chronically ill, such as those with diabetes.

Most physicians and pharmacists agree that adherence to treatment is a major step in improving outcomes for those with chronic illness. The home-delivery feature of mail-service pharmacies is of particular importance to elderly and disabled individuals with limited mobility. Mail-service pharmacies have pharmacists available over the phone 24/7 to assure consumers the ability to ask and get the answers for any questions they may have about their medications. Additional research has also shown mail-service pharmacies dispense prescriptions with far greater accuracy and cost consumers less than “brick-and-mortar” pharmacies.

For these reasons, we are concerned that any changes to the current mail delivery schedule could have a significant adverse impact on Americans’ ability to take full advantage of the benefits of mail-service pharmacy. We urge the committee to investigate other avenues for improving the Postal Service’s financial condition while still retaining six-day delivery. Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Merritt". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mark" and last name "Merritt" clearly distinguishable.

Mark Merritt
President and Chief Executive Officer

Cc: The Honorable Darrell Issa, Ranking Member
House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

The Honorable Stephen Lynch, Chairman
Subcommittee on the Federal Workforce, Postal Service, and the District of
Columbia

The Honorable Jason Chaffetz, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on the Federal Workforce, Postal Service, and the District of
Columbia