



March 5, 2018

Chairwoman Shane E. Pendergrass
House Health & Government Operations Committee
House Office Building, Room 241
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: H.B. 1416 – Drugs and Devices - Electronic Prescriptions - Requirements

Dear Chairwoman Pendergrass:

The Pharmaceutical Care Management Association (PCMA) is the national association representing America's pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs). PBMs administer prescription drug plans and operate mail-order and specialty pharmacies for more than 266 million Americans with health coverage through Fortune 500 companies, health insurers, labor unions, Medicare, Medicaid, and other programs.

PCMA supports H.B. 1416, which would require authorized prescribers to use electronic prescription electronically, except under specified exceptions.

Medicare electronic prescribing was enacted in 2008 with strong bipartisan support as part of the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act. E-prescribing can improve a patient's medication experience by encouraging discussions with their physician about the most effective prescription, discussing lower-cost generic alternatives, and having prescriptions sent to desired pharmacies with the click of a button. In addition, because the prescription is handled electronically, e-prescribing virtually eliminates medication errors associated with illegible handwriting.

In 2016, e-prescribing for non-controlled substances was used by 98% of pharmacies and 64% of prescribers, with 1.6 billion (73% of total) new prescriptions transmitted electronically.

Until 2010, the Drug Enforcement Agency barred e-prescribing for controlled substances. All states now permit its use, and an increasing number of states require its use. E-prescribing for controlled substances, combined with strong Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs, helps circumscribe doctor and pharmacy shopping, enables better prescription tracking, and reduces fraud. PCMA has been [actively engaged](#) with FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb to develop common-sense policies to address the rampant opioid abuse in the United States, and e-prescribing is a good place to start.

We applaud Del. Saab's efforts to improve patient care in Maryland, and we urge Members of the Committee to vote in favor of this bill. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "R. Scott Woods".

R. Scott Woods
Senior Director, State Affairs
Pharmaceutical Care Management Association