



DATE: March 21, 2023 **COMMITTEE:** Senate Finance
BILL NO: Senate Bill 940
BILL TITLE: Pharmacies - Prescription Drugs - Accessible Labels for Blind, Visually Impaired, and Print Disabled Individuals
POSITION: Support

Kennedy Krieger Institute supports Senate Bill 940 - Pharmacies - Prescription Drugs - Accessible Labels for Blind, Visually Impaired, and Print Disabled Individuals

Bill Summary:

Senate Bill 940 requires pharmacies to notify patrons that an accessible label for blind, visually impaired, or otherwise print disabled individuals is available on request for no additional cost. Notification will be by posting a notice that is accessible to all customers, located at the pharmacy and online. The legislation also outlines what an accessible label shall be. **If the Senate chooses to amend the bill to match the House crossfile, the bill will change the responsibility from pharmacies to the State Board of Pharmacy. Kennedy Krieger supports these changes.**

Background:

Kennedy Krieger Institute provides specialized services to patients and students nationally and internationally. Kennedy Krieger Institute is dedicated to improving the lives of children and young adults with developmental, behavioral, cognitive and physical challenges. Kennedy Krieger's services include inpatient, outpatient, school-based and community-based programs.

The Maryland Center for Developmental Disabilities (MCDD) at Kennedy Krieger Institute is proud to be Maryland's University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research, and Service (UCEDD) and a member of the national Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD).

MCDD links the community to vital services, research and information to improve the lives of people with disabilities. Our mission is to provide leadership that advances the inclusion of people with intellectual, developmental and other disabilities through preservice preparation and training; research and evaluation; community service and technical assistance; and information dissemination.

Rationale:

Having accessible labels for prescriptions is an important step to preventing at-home medication errors including taking the wrong medication, missing a refill date, or ingesting expired medications. Prescription labels contain vital information that must be accessible to the person taking the medication.

In 2012, President Obama signed into law the Food and Drug Administration Safety and Innovation Act. Among the initiatives of this law, it created a Working Group on Accessible Prescription Drug Container Labels. In 2013, the Workgroup submitted their best practice recommendations. However, these recommendations are advisory, and not mandatory.

This legislation is an important tool to ensuring visually impaired or blind individuals know of their options when filling and refilling prescriptions.

Kennedy Krieger Institute requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 940.