



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H., Secretary

February 1, 2024

The Honorable Joseline A. Peña-Melnyk
Chair, House Health and Government Operations Committee
Room 241, House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: House Bill 76 – Health Occupations – Pharmacists – Administration of Vaccines – Letter of Support

Dear Chair Peña-Melnyk and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) respectfully submits this letter of support for House Bill (HB) 76 – Health Occupations – Pharmacists – Administration of Vaccines, which authorizes pharmacists to order and administer certain vaccinations to children aged five and older, subject to certain requirements. The bill expands the types of vaccinations pharmacists can administer to this age group and adjusts the circumstances under which pharmacists may administer them.

Pharmacists have taken on an increasingly critical role in advancing vaccination coverage, having safely administered over 12.6 million vaccinations to Maryland residents since 2020. Notably, more than 1 million of these vaccinations were provided to children under 18 years old, as reported by ImmuNet, the Maryland statewide vaccine registry.

Enabling pharmacists to administer vaccines to children can reduce various barriers faced by Maryland families, enhancing vaccination coverage among Maryland children. Given the broad geographic distribution and hours of operation of pharmacies, making vaccines available to children via pharmacists helps to promote health equity.

HB 76 proactively addresses concerns about children missing routine pediatric care by requiring pharmacists administering vaccines to children to inform parents/guardians about the importance of well-child visits with a pediatric primary care provider. Additionally, as required by HB 1040/SB 736 (2021), MDH recently submitted a report to the House Health and Government Operations Committee and the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee of the General Assembly highlighting the critical role Maryland pharmacists have played in vaccinating children. Recognizing the importance of vaccination and of the ability of Maryland pharmacists to safely and effectively administer vaccines to children, MDH strongly supports this bill.

If you would like to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact Sarah Case-Herron, Director of Governmental Affairs at sarah.case-herron@maryland.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "LH Scott".

Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H.
Secretary