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February 1, 2022

The Honorable Paul G. Pinsky
Senate Education, Health, and
Environmental Affairs Committee
2 West, Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Senate Bill 19 - Pharmacists – Administration of Maintenance Injectable Medications – Treatment of Sexually Transmitted Infections.

Dear Chairman Pinsky,

The League of Life and Health Insurers of Maryland, Inc. respectfully **opposes** Senate Bill 19 –Pharmacists – Administration of Maintenance Injectable Medications – Treatment of Sexually Transmitted Infections and urges the committee to give the bill an unfavorable report.

Senate Bill 19 alters the definition of “maintenance injectable medication” to include a medication that is administered by injection other than intravenously and treats a sexually transmitted infection and is not a vaccine.

Our concern with Senate Bill 19 is that it creates a false definition of “maintenance injectable medication.” By its very nature, a medication for treatment of a sexually transmitted infection is not “maintenance.” Current law defines “maintenance injectable medication as a medication that is “administered by injection other than intravenously,” and “treats a chronic need, condition, or disorder.”

Including medication for a sexually transmitted infection in this definition is confusing and inaccurate. The sponsor’s staff indicated to us that the aim of the bill was to treat “post exposure” for patients. Care and for exposure is fundamentally not a maintenance course of treatment, and therefore falls outside of the compromise struck in Chapters 820 and 821 of 2017 that expanded the scope of practice for a licensed pharmacist.

Another concern League members have is that Senate Bill 19 is an expansion of the benefit mandate in Chapter 757 of 2021 that was created for maintenance injectable medications. The League opposes any additional mandated benefits to Maryland’s law. Mandated benefits add cost to health insurance policies

in our state and limit the ability of insurers to design benefits to best meet the needs of enrollees. Given the potential impact to health insurance costs in the State, Maryland law includes a statutory framework for review and evaluation of proposed mandated benefits by the Maryland Health Care Commission under § 15-1501 of the Insurance Article. The law requires the assessment of a proposed mandate for the social, medical and financial impact of the proposed mandate and equips the General Assembly with such information as the extent to which the service is generally utilized by a significant portion of the population; the extent to which the insurance coverage is already generally available; if coverage is not generally available, the extent to which the lack of coverage results in individuals avoiding necessary health care treatments; if coverage is not generally available, the extent to which the lack of coverage results in unreasonable financial hardship; and the level of public demand for the service. Before adopting this or any other mandated health benefit, we urge the Committee first request an evaluation of the proposed benefit to facilitate an informed decision.

For these reasons, the League urges the committee to give Senate Bill 19 an unfavorable report.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matthew Celentano", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Matthew Celentano
Executive Director

cc: Members, Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee