

HB1232: Health Occupations- Pharmacists- Administration of Vaccines

UNFAVORABLE

Sarah Cusack, MPT

Dear Chair Pena-Melnyk, Vice Chair Cullison, and Distinguished Members of the House Health and Government Operations Committee,

As a pediatric physical therapist and a mother, I am opposed to the concept of this bill. Pharmacists are not pediatricians. Pediatricians are supposed to do a thorough assessment of a child before they recommend and administer any vaccination. The CDC recommended schedule it just that.... A recommendation! Pharmacists will just look at a child's age and give them everything on the list.

As a physical therapist, I do not look at a child's diagnosis, find a checklist in a textbook and start treating them according to a checklist. I do an assessment and come up with a treatment plan that is specific and individual to that child. That is what the pediatrician is supposed to do.

Children are not vaccinated like adults. They have a complex schedule which often requires exposing both shoulders and both thighs. 4-year-old children receive a DTaP, MMR, Varicella, Polio, Flu shot, and Covid vaccine in a single visit. 11-year-old children get a TDaP, Meningococcal, HPV shot, Flu, and Covid in a single visit. Children do not sit perfectly still to receive these injections. In the pediatrician's office a nurse and a parent hold legs and arms down while another nurse administers shots. Private rooms are available to remove clothing.

I have spoken to several young mothers who are hopeful that the bill will pass. They feel bullied in their appointments with the pediatrician and are asked to leave if they even ask a single question about a shot that the child is about to receive. If the bill passes, they told me they will skip the pediatrician and get what shots they want, when they want them, at the pharmacy. This will lead to a drop in vaccination rates in our state, a drop in well-child visits, and missed diagnoses and medical issues because pharmacists cannot examine the child.

I ask the committee for an Unfavorable report on HB1232.

Thank You,
Sarah Cusack, MPT

