



Committee: Senate Finance Committee

Bill Number: SB 246

Title: Public Health - Nonoccupational Postexposure Prophylaxis (nPEP) Standing Order Program - Establishment

Hearing Date: January 30, 2024

Position: Support

The Maryland Affiliate of the American College of Nurse Midwives (ACNM) supports *Senate Bill 246 – Public Health - Nonoccupational Postexposure Prophylaxis (nPEP) Standing Order Program - Establishment*. This bill establishes the nPEP Standing Order Program to authorize pharmacists and health care providers to prescribe or dispense nPEP.

PEP, a form of nPEP, is a short-term treatment that must be started as soon as possible after high-risk non-occupational exposure to HIV. With such a narrow window of time, we must develop innovative ways to ensure people who are high-risk can more easily access PEP. Under our current laws, the individual must see a provider for a prescription, which often requires waiting for an appointment and navigating the health care system. Under this bill, pharmacists and non-clinicians could dispense PEP to an individual directly through a written agreement with a prescriber. As a result, outreach and mobile programs could dispense PEP when identifying someone at risk and then link them to the health care system.

With almost 800 newly diagnosed cases of HIV in Maryland in 2021 (the latest year where information is available), we need new public health approaches to disease prevention.ⁱ We ask for a favorable report. If we can provide any additional information, please contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net or (443) 926-3443.

ⁱ <https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/basics/statistics.html>