



NewsRelease

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Pharmacy Groups Urge Continued Access to Diabetic Testing Supplies for Patients with Diabetes in Retail Pharmacy

Alexandria, Va. – The American Pharmacists Association (APhA), Food Marketing Institute (FMI), National Association of Chain Drug Stores (NACDS) and National Alliance of State Pharmacy Associations (NASPA) today issued a [letter](#) to U.S. Senate and House Leadership urging Congress to maintain access to diabetic testing supplies for patients with diabetes in retail pharmacies.

In 2003, Congress created the Medicare Part B competitive bidding program for durable medical equipment. While diabetic testing supplies are considered durable medical equipment under the Medicare program, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) intentionally and wisely excluded diabetic testing supplies furnished by retail pharmacies from the competitive bidding process to ensure access to these vital supplies for diabetic patients.

APhA, FMI, NACDS and NASPA are urging Congress to maintain the current exclusion in the competitive bidding program for all retail pharmacies providing diabetes testing supplies for Medicare beneficiaries.

“Medicare patients with diabetes rely heavily on local retail pharmacies for prescription medications and diabetes testing supplies. Pharmacists help seniors with diabetes understand the best way to use their diabetes testing equipment and are uniquely positioned to help identify changes in patients’ conditions that may require additional referral and treatment. This coordinated care is vital to seniors with diabetes, helping them manage their disease,

navigating through the various options available to them, and preventing more costly interventions,” the letter stated.

“Ending the retail pharmacy exclusion from the competitive bidding program would be a major mistake. This would significantly reduce access to local pharmacies as a source of care. Limiting access to supplies and pharmacist consultation will lead to under-testing, decreased medication adherence, poorer outcomes and increased costs,” the letter continued.

To view the letter, please click [here](#).

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The American Pharmacists Association, founded in 1852 as the American Pharmaceutical Association, is a 501 C6 organization, representing more than 62,000 practicing pharmacists, pharmaceutical scientists, student pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and others interested in advancing the profession. APhA, dedicated to helping all pharmacists improve medication use and advance patient care, is the first-established and largest association of pharmacists in the United States.

Food Marketing Institute (FMI) conducts programs in public affairs, food safety, research, education and industry relations on behalf of its 1,500 member companies — food retailers and wholesalers — in the United States and around the world. FMI’s U.S. members operate approximately 26,000 retail food stores and 14,000 pharmacies. Their combined annual sales volume of \$680 billion represents three-quarters of all retail food store sales in the United States. FMI’s retail membership is composed of large multi-store chains, regional firms and independent supermarkets. Its international membership includes 200 companies from more than 50 countries. FMI’s associate members include the supplier partners of its retail and wholesale members.

The National Association of Chain Drug Stores (NACDS) represents traditional drug stores, supermarkets, and mass merchants with pharmacies – from regional chains with four stores to national companies. Chains operate 39,000 pharmacies, and employ more than 2.7 million employees, including 118,000 full-time pharmacists. They fill nearly 2.6 billion prescriptions annually, which is more than 72 percent of annual prescriptions in the United States. The total economic impact of all retail stores with pharmacies transcends their \$830 billion in annual sales. Every \$1 spent in these stores creates a ripple effect of \$1.96 in other industries, for a total economic impact of \$1.57 trillion, equal to 11 percent of GDP. NACDS represents 137 chains that operate these pharmacies in neighborhoods across America, and NACDS members also include more than 900 pharmacy and consumer packaged goods suppliers and service providers, and over 60 international members from 23 countries. For more information about NACDS, visit www.NACDS.org.

The National Alliance of State Pharmacy Associations (NASPA) promotes leadership, sharing, learning, and policy exchange among state pharmacy associations and pharmacy leaders nationwide, and provides education and advocacy to support pharmacists, patients, and communities working together to improve public health. NASPA was founded in 1927 as the National Council of State Pharmacy Association Executives (NCSPA).