



RI Department of Health  
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[www.health.ri.gov](http://www.health.ri.gov)

April 14, 2026

The Honorable Susan R. Donovan, Chair  
House Committee on Health and Human Services  
State House  
82 Smith St.  
Providence, RI 02903

**RE: H 7921 – An Act Relating to Businesses and Professions – Pharmacists Test-and-Treat Authority Act**

Dear Chair Donovan:

Please accept this letter regarding H 7921, legislation that would authorize pharmacists to order, perform, and interpret CLIA-waived tests authorized by statewide protocol and prescribe medications. This act would further permit such test-and-treat authority to be covered by all health insurance carriers. The Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) defers to the Office of the Health Insurance Commissioner (OHIC) and Medicaid on the health insurance coverage provisions included in this bill. RIDOH is in conceptual support of H 7921, with amendments.

Rhode Island’s Rural Health Transformation Grant and, more specifically, Section 1 of the Governor’s Budget Amendment 6 (Rural Health Transformation Program Amendment) adds a section to R.I.G.L. § 5-19.1 to expand pharmacists’ authority to independently prescribe specified drugs, devices, and laboratory tests that are critical to the improvement of public health and are in accordance with the product’s federal Food and Drug Administration-approved labeling, including:

- Drugs for medication assisted treatment (MAT) of opioid use disorder;
- Nicotine/tobacco cessation products;
- Hyperlipidemia medications;
- Inhalers for COPD or asthma;
- Insulin and diabetes medications;
- Drugs to treat hypertension;
- Treatment for positive infectious disease point of care testing for influenza, COVID-19, group A strep, and other infections approved by the Director of RIDOH; and
- Such other drugs, drug categories, or devices set forth in the regulations promulgated by the Rhode Island Department of Health in collaboration with the Board of Pharmacy.

Section 2 of the Governor’s Budget Amendment 6 amends R.I.G.L. § 5-19.1-2 to change the definition of “practice of pharmacy” by allowing pharmacists to perform clinical laboratory tests beyond “limited function tests” as currently allowed. The provisions included in H 7921 are more limited than those included in the Governor’s Budget Amendment. *It is for this reason that RIDOH respectfully recommends amending H 7921 to align with the*

***Governor's Budget amendment, which is aligned with Rhode Island's Rural Health Transformation Grant requirements and authorizes pharmacists to order any laboratory tests (not just CLIA-waived laboratory tests) to prescribe for one of the allowed conditions included in Section 1 of the Budget Amendment.***

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jerome M. Larkin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jerome M. Larkin, MD  
Director

CC: The Honorable Members of the House Committee on Health & Human Services  
The Honorable Michelle E. McGaw  
Nicole McCarty, Esquire, Chief Legal Counsel  
Lynne Urbani, Director of House Policy