

## Working Group to Study Pharmacist Compensation

### MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, July 24, 2025

11:00 AM in Room 2D of the LOB and Zoom and YouTube Live

The meeting was called to order at 11:00 AM by Representative Kerry Wood.

The following working group members were present:

Members: Rep. Wood K. 029, Sen. Cabrera J. S17, Rep. Pavalock-D'Amato C. 077, Sen. Hwang T. 028, Michelle Pope (Insurance Dept.), Troy Ruff (Dept. of Consumer Protection), Todd DeGroff (Independent Pharmacy), Julian Koruni (Chain Pharmacy), Osama Abdelghany (Health System Pharmacy), Sam Hallemeier (PCMA – PBM Representative), Susan Halpin (Insurance Representative), Marie Smith (UConn School of Pharmacy), Tim Phelan (CT Retail Network – Small Employer), Paul Pescatello (CBIA – Large Employer), Kelly Cote (Access Health CT), Matt Murphy (Health System – Hem/Onc), Ed Schreiner (Northeast Pharmacy Service Corps).

Absent were:

The Working Group to Study Pharmacist Compensation, established under PA 25-167, convened on July 24, 2025 at 11:00 AM. There were sixteen members present, including the legislative chairs, ranking members, commissioner designees, independent, chain, and health system pharmacists, as well as representatives from PBMs, insurers, employers, academia, and the Connecticut Health Insurance Exchange. The only absence was the representative from a pharmaceutical company, whose appointment remains pending.

In opening remarks, Rep. Wood emphasized the group's statutory charge to examine fair compensation for pharmacists providing health services such as vaccinations, testing, and contraceptive prescribing. Sen. Cabrera highlighted the need to balance equitable pay with cost containment for insurers and employers. Members then engaged in discussion on the scope of pharmacist services, reimbursement challenges,

and employer and payer perspectives. Pharmacists Julian Koruni and Todd DeGroff outlined the growing demands on pharmacists and the challenges independents face in reimbursement negotiations compared with large chains. Sam Hallemeier, representing PBMs, stressed transparency in billing codes, while insurance representative Susan Halpin noted concerns about rising premiums. Employer voices diverged slightly, with Tim Phelan underscoring the strain small businesses face from increasing health costs, while Paul Pescatello from CBIA acknowledged the value of expanded pharmacist roles but urged measurable outcomes before coverage expansion.

Academic and regulatory perspectives were also shared. Marie Smith from UConn referenced evidence showing better adherence and patient outcomes when pharmacists are more directly involved in care, while Michelle Pope from the Insurance Department and Troy Ruff from the Department of Consumer Protection clarified the current regulatory boundaries on prescriptive authority and testing. Additional members Matt Murphy and Ed Schreiner contributed insights from oncology and workforce development, respectively, emphasizing how compensation reforms could improve both patient access and pharmacist recruitment.

The group agreed on next steps, directing staff to prepare draft legislative options, including potential new billing codes, Medicaid pilot programs, and parity measures for private payers. Subcommittees may be formed to address independent versus chain pharmacy concerns and to explore employer and insurance perspectives more fully. The meeting adjourned at 11:42 AM.

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Allie Kyff  
Working Group Administrator