



## COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Ricardo Sanchez, Public Member, Chairperson  
Jason Weisz, Public Member, Vice Chairperson  
Jose De La Paz, Public Member  
Kula Koenig, Public Member  
Nicole Thibeau, Licensee Member

- a. **Call to Order and Establishment of Quorum**
- b. **Public Comment for Items Not on the Agenda; Matters for Future Meetings**  
*The committee may not discuss or act on any matter raised during the public comment section that is not included on this agenda, except to place the matter on a future meeting agenda. [Government Code sections 11125 & 11125.7(a)]*
- c. **Approval of the April 26, 2022, Communication and Public Education Committee Meeting Minutes**

A draft of the minutes is in **Attachment 1**.

- d. **Discussion and Consideration of Providing Education to Licensees about the Institute for Safe Medication Practices**

### Background

At the January 2022 meeting of the Medication Error Reduction and Workforce Committee, members heard a presentation about the Institute for Safe Medication Practices (ISMP). The presentation included the institute's efforts to reduce medication errors, which relies on health care providers and consumers to voluntarily report medication errors. ISMP officials also meet regularly and share information with the FDA.

The committee also learned about many resources ISMP provides to help health care workers prevent medication errors. These resources include publications with tips for preventing errors and "alerts" regarding issues that require immediate attention. ISMP also provides lists of confusing drug names and high-alert medications to help both health care workers and consumers better understand their prescription medications.

Committee members suggested the Communication and Public Education Committee consider opportunities to educate licensees about ISMP and its tools for preventing medication errors.

#### At Today's Meeting

Staff recommends publishing an article in The Script describing ISMP and its work and highlighting resources it offers that can help pharmacies and pharmacists prevent medication errors. In addition, a link to ISMP could be posted under "Important Information for Licensees" on the Board's website. Staff welcomes committee members' comments on the recommendation or any other suggestions.

### **e. Discussion and Consideration of Providing Naloxone Educational Materials for Pharmacists**

#### Background

At the July 2021 meeting of the Enforcement Committee, members and public speakers discussed challenges in getting pharmacists to furnish naloxone. Some said pharmacists are too busy to furnish naloxone. Others said the naloxone protocol requires pharmacist to engage with patients, but many pharmacists are uncomfortable or do not want to engage with patients.

The committee recommended the Communication and Public Education Committee develop educational materials to assist pharmacists in understanding the value of naloxone and how to operationalize naloxone distribution.

#### At Today's Meeting

Staff notes the [naloxone](#) section of the Board's website includes a training webinar to enable pharmacists to meet the requirements of [California Code of Regulations \(CCR\), Title 16, section 1746.3](#), the state's protocol for pharmacists furnishing naloxone. The website also includes other educational and operational tools for pharmacists, including [FAQs](#) and [sample naloxone labels](#), as well as [fact sheets](#) and [screening questions](#) in English and six additional languages.

Staff recommends publishing an article in The Script about the Board's online resources to assist pharmacists in furnishing naloxone. The article also would discuss the importance of furnishing naloxone in saving lives and the important role pharmacists perform in providing naloxone and increasing access to naloxone in communities. Staff welcomes committee members' comments on the recommendation or any other suggestions.

### **f. Discussion and Consideration of the Committee's Strategic Plan Objectives**

#### Background

The Board's [Strategic Plan 2022-2026](#) includes eight goals that guide policies and actions implemented by the Communication and Public Education Committee.

#### At Today's Meeting

Staff requests the committee consider whether the current goals remain suitable or whether specific goals should be revised or new goals adopted. Staff has listed the goals in

this report and provided comments for each goal for the committee’s consideration. After reviewing the goals, committee members are welcome to provide comments or direction to staff regarding the strategic goals.

### **Communication and Public Education Strategic Goals**

#### **4.1 Develop a consumer education campaign to educate consumers about the Board and the importance of pharmacy services, including patient consultation.**

Status: Staff has launched this campaign with an effort to update the Board’s Notice to Consumers poster and regulation, [CCR section 1707.6](#), to give consumers more relevant information about their rights and an explicit reminder to speak to their pharmacist about their medications.

#### **4.2 Reevaluate, and update if necessary, educational materials related to pharmacy law to assist licensees in operating in compliance.**

Status: The Board continuously updates key resources to keep licensees informed on pharmacy law and regulations. The online [Pharmacy Lawbook](#) is updated regularly with newly adopted laws and regulations. The Board also creates a new [pharmacy law webinar](#) each year. In addition, the Board posts constant updates to [pharmacy law waivers](#) online and proactively disseminates updates about laws, regulations, and waivers in subscriber alerts and The Script.

#### **4.3 Promote the self-assessment process to educate licensees about the importance of the tool.**

Status: Staff is currently working with DCA’s Office of Information Services to evaluate the feasibility of transforming the self-assessment forms to an online, more interactive process that would actively engage pharmacists in ensuring their operations comply with pharmacy law.

#### **4.4 Create an educational program for the colleges of pharmacy and a required training prior to obtaining an intern license to ensure an understanding of the Board and its consumer protection mandate.**

Status: Board staff provide outreach at pharmacy schools by providing presentations to pharmacy students on licensing requirements and how to complete applications for both pharmacist and intern pharmacist licenses.

#### **4.5 Increase outreach and education to licensees to expand knowledge of the Board and to promote compliance.**

Status: Staff continue to provide continuing education to pharmacists on preventing drug abuse and drug diversion. The online platform has enabled staff to provide the training to more pharmacists statewide than live events permitted before the pandemic. As conditions improve, staff hopes to offer more outreach events in person as well as via WebEx. In addition, licensing staff has started providing presentations at California schools of pharmacy on how to apply for an intern pharmacist license and how to apply to take the

pharmacist exam. Staff provides in-person and live WebEx presentations on Board activities and changes in pharmacy law.

**4.6 Create more webinars to post on the website to disseminate basic information.**

Status: The Board recently posted a training webinar for pharmacists furnishing HIV PrEP/PEP medications pursuant to SB 159. To gauge participants' comprehension of the training material, the webinar includes a 10-question assessment that participants must pass in order to receive a certificate of completion. The training program is the latest in a series of educational webinars of important topics – including law, ethics, furnishing naloxone, and preparing for an inspection – that the Board has developed and made available for free to inform and educate licensees.

**4.7 Improve communication to licensees by personalizing it and decreasing verbiage to encourage licensee engagement.**

Status: The Board has established listservs for each type of personal license to better target subscriber alerts to pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, designated representatives, and intern pharmacists. In addition, staff keep communications in subscriber alerts and Script article as succinct and direct as possible.

**4.8 Research creating a recognition program for pharmacists to help build relationships between public, licensees, and the Board.**

Status: The Board honors pharmacists who have maintained their California pharmacy license on active status for 40 years or more. These pharmacists are identified publicly in The Script and [online](#) and invited to be recognized and honored at Board meetings.

**g. Discussion and Consideration of Public Awareness Campaign “Treating Your Pharmacy Staff with Courtesy”**

Background

At the June 22, 2022, meeting of the Medication Error Reduction and Workforce Committee, members received a presentation from the American Pharmacist Association (APhA) about the Well-Being Index for Pharmacy Personnel – an online tool that health care professionals can use to self-assess their well-being. The index allows APhA to track levels of reported well-being and distress among pharmacists, student pharmacists, and pharmacy technicians nationally as well as by state, including California.

During the discussion, members expressed concern that a general lack of respect for pharmacists among the public compared to other professionals may contribute to distress on the job. Licensee members on the committee told of being bullied and harassed by customers and their work being belittled as “just putting pills in a bottle.” The APhA presenter noted that harassment and bullying by coworkers as well as patients is higher for pharmacy staff who are women and people of color.

Members also discussed ways to promote the Well-Being Index among California licensees, including an article in The Script and posting information on the Board’s website.

At Today’s Meeting

Staff welcomes members to discuss and consider whether development of a public awareness campaign related to this issue is appropriate.

**h. Senate Resolution Designating September 2022 as Opioid, Heroin, Fentanyl, and Prescription Drug Abuse Awareness Month**

Background

State Senator Patricia Bates (R-Laguna Niguel) has introduced [Senate Concurrent Resolution 115](#), which would designate September 2022 as Opioid, Heroin, Fentanyl, and Prescription Drug Abuse Awareness Month. The measure is intended to increase public awareness of the dangers and increasing prevalence of abuse of opioids, heroin, fentanyl, and prescription drugs.

The resolution includes several important legislative findings, including:

- In 2020, more than 14,800,000 opioid prescriptions were written in California.
- From 1999 to 2020, inclusive, more than 500,000 people died from overdoses related to opioids in the United States. In the 12-month period ending in April 2021, overdose deaths from opioids increased to 75,673 in the United States, up from 56,064 the year before.
- Fentanyl is 50 times more potent than heroin and 100 times more powerful than morphine, according to the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The number of deaths from fentanyl overdoses by more than 2,100% in California in five years. Overdoses of synthetic opioids killed nearly 4,000 residents in California in 2020, with 3,946 attributed to fentanyl, according to the most recent estimate from the CDC and the California Department of Public Health (CDPH).
- Abuse of opioid pain relievers is the strongest risk factor for heroin abuse. Seventy-five percent of new heroin users were first addicted to a legally prescribed opioid drug. Many teens and young adults first use opioids when they are prescribed to them following an injury or routine procedure like the removal of wisdom teeth.
- Drug overdoses kill more people in one year than do the number of motor vehicle fatalities in the United States. Most people who are addicted to opioids cannot taper off, or use less of the drug over time, without help.

At Today’s Meeting

Staff proposes posting the measure on the Board’s website under [Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention](#) and developing a social media campaign. As part of the campaign, the Board could highlight consumer information on the website, including the importance of removing unused medication from the home, drug takeback locations, treatment resources, etc.

**i. Update on Communication and Public Education Activities by Staff**

**1. The Script**

Staff is researching and writing articles for the next issue of the newsletter, which is set for publication this summer. Topics include new regulations, the new Strategic Plan, information about COVID-19 waivers, and requirements for pharmacists disassociating from pharmacies as PIC.

**2. Staff Outreach**

Staff has provided presentations on the pharmacist exam application for students at the following schools of pharmacy: Loma Linda University, UCSF, USC, Northstate University, and American University of Health Sciences. Staff has also provided presentations on the intern pharmacist application at USC and UCSF.

The Board also hosted a dozen listening sessions in March and April 2022 for pharmacy technicians and pharmacists in preparation for the April 19, 2022, Pharmacy Technician summit. In addition, licensees were invited to complete an online survey on topics related to the summit, which looked at possible changes to authorized functions of pharmacist technicians.

Additional staff outreach activities are listed in **Attachment 2**.

**3. News Media**

News media inquiries received during the second quarter of 2022 are listed in **Attachment 3**.

**4. Educational Resources**

Staff has drafted informational text for licensees who want to file a complaint alleging pharmacy quotas in violation of [SB 362](#) (Chapter 334, Statutes of 2021). Once approved, the information will be disseminated to licensees in subscriber alerts and also published in The Script as well as posted in a brochure online.

Staff is updating the current [pharmacy inspections brochure](#) to include information about additional documents and items Board inspectors will review during a site inspection. The revisions to the brochure are undergoing legal review.

**j. Future Meeting Dates**

Meeting dates in 2023 will be posted online under [Communication and Public Education Committee Meetings](#) when they become available.

**Adjournment**

**Upon Conclusion of Business**

# **Attachment 1**

**Draft Minutes – April 26, 2022, Meeting of the  
Communication and Public Education  
Committee**



**California State Board of Pharmacy**  
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Sacramento, CA 95833  
Phone: (916) 518-3100 Fax: (916) 574-8614  
www.pharmacy.ca.gov

Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency  
Department of Consumer Affairs  
Gavin Newsom, Governor



## **Communication and Public Education Committee DRAFT Meeting Minutes**

**Date:** Tuesday, April 26, 2022

**Teleconference Locations:** Department of Consumer Affairs  
1625 N. Market Blvd, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Hearing Room  
Sacramento, CA 95834

La Quinta Inn & Suites by Wyndham LAX  
5249 W. Century Blvd, Century Ballroom  
Los Angeles, CA 90045

**Members Present:** Ricardo Sanchez, Public Member, Chairperson  
Jason Weisz, Public Member, Vice Chairperson  
Jose De La Paz, Public Member  
Kula Koenig, Public Member

**Staff Present:** Anne Sodergren, Executive Officer  
Eileen Smiley, DCA Counsel  
Debbie Damoth, Administration Manager  
Anne Altamirano, Public Records Analyst  
Bob Dávila, Public Information Officer

**a. Call to Order and Establishment of Quorum**

Chairperson Sanchez called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m. Present: De La Paz, Koenig, Weisz, Sanchez. Absent: Kim, Thibeau. Quorum established.

**b. Public Comment for Items Not on the Agenda; Matters for Future Meetings**

No public comments or matters for future meetings.

**c. Approval of the July 14, 2021, Communication and Public Education Committee Meeting Minutes**

No committee member comments. No public comments.

M/S: De La Paz/Weisz

Yes: De La Paz, Koenig, Sanchez, Weisz



No: None.  
Abstain: None.

**d. Approval of the January 19, 2022, Communication and Public Education Committee Meeting Minutes**

No committee member comments. No public comments.

M/S: Weisz/De La Paz  
Yes: De La Paz, Koenig, Sanchez, Weisz  
No: None.  
Abstain: None.

**e. Update on Communication and Public Education Activities by Staff**

**1. The Script**

Ms. Sodergren advised the committee that staff has issued the first issue of the Script for 2022. Articles include changes in pharmacy law, COVID vaccine programs, the responsibilities of a pharmacist-in-charge, and strategies for reducing drug diversion by pharmacy employees. Staff expects to publish the next issue this summer highlighting changes in pharmacy regulations as well as enforcement trends, citations and other items from the report to the Enforcement Committee in July.

**2. Staff Outreach**

Ms. Sodergren reported on a training event related to prescription drug abuse and drug diversion provided by the Board on March 11. She noted the training was free and more than 500 participants attended the event, which was held via Webex. She said the online training would continue but staff may try to resume in-person training as well, although she noted that the Webex platform has allowed staff to expand the training audience.

Ms. Sodergren also noted the upcoming graduation season for schools of pharmacy and said staff would provide presentations for interested schools on the pharmacist application process to help avoid deficiencies in applications.

**3. News Media**

Mr. Dávila advised the committee a list of recent inquiries from news reporters was included in Attachment 3.

**4. Webinars**

Mr. Dávila advised the committee staff has completed production and made available online free webinar training for pharmacists initiating and furnishing HIV pre-exposure and post-exposure prophylaxis. He noted the webinar is 90 minutes long and includes an assessment pharmacists must pass with a least a score of 70 percent to obtain a

certificate of completion. He added pharmacists who do not view the entire 90 minutes will not receive a certificate of completion, regardless of their assessment score.

Mr. Dávila also noted staff is currently producing the annual pharmacy law update webinar and expects the webinar to be completed by summer.

Mr. Weisz asked if pharmacists are advised they must watch the entire 90 minutes of the HIV PrEP/PEP webinar to receive credit. Mr. Dávila replied that information on website advises participants about the requirement to view all 90 minutes of the program. In addition, those who do not view the entire program can simply go back and watch the webinar online.

f. Future Meeting Dates

Chairperson Sanchez advised the committee the remaining meeting scheduled in 2022 are set for Tuesday, July 19, and Tuesday, October 25.

**Adjournment**

Chairperson Sanchez adjourned the meeting at 1:22 p.m.

# **Attachment 2**

## **Staff Outreach Activities**

### **Staff Outreach Activities**

Board members and staff participated in the following outreach activities in the second quarter of 2022:

- April 22-23, 2022: President Oh, Dr. Acosta and Ms. Sodergren represented the Board at the California Pharmacists Association annual meeting. Dr. Acosta provided a presentation on compounding requirements. Ms. Sodergren provided a presentation on changes in pharmacy law and updates on Board activities.
- May 14: Ms. Sodergren provided a presentation on changes in pharmacy law and updates on Board activities.
- May 31: Ms. Sodergren provided a brief presentation on the Board's efforts to secure changes in pharmacist authority to provide CLIA waived tests in Senate Bill 409 (Statutes of 2022) as part of the California Society of Health-System's "Pharmacists Policy and Legislative Day."

# **Attachment 3**

## **News Media Inquiries**

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Staff responded to the following news media inquiries during the second quarter of 2022:

- April 14: Alex MacLean, Sonora Union Democrat, regarding Save Mart pharmacy in Sonora declining to fill controlled substances prescriptions.
- April 26: Ed Silverman, STAT, regarding revocation of Optum Rx pharmacy license for series of violations jeopardizing patient health.
- May 31: Colin Flanders, Seven Days (newspaper), regarding cease and desist order against Edge Pharma outsourcing facility.
- June 16: Josh Slowiczek, CBS 13, regarding Save Mart pharmacy in Sonora declining to fill some prescriptions for patients.