

Date of Hearing: May 4, 2022

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Chris Holden, Chair

AB 2194 (Ward) – As Introduced February 15, 2022

Policy Committee: Business and Professions Vote: 16 - 0

Urgency: No State Mandated Local Program: No Reimbursable: No

**SUMMARY:**

This bill requires pharmacists and pharmacy technicians to complete, as part of the 30 hours of continuing education they must complete every two years as a condition license renewal, at least one hour of participation in a cultural competency and humility course focused on lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer or questioning (LGBTQ+) patients and health disparities faced by Black and indigenous people and people of color, as specified.

**FISCAL EFFECT:**

The California State Board of Pharmacy (Board) estimates absorbable cost of approximately \$28,000 (Pharmacy Board Contingent Fund) to update renewal applications, promulgate regulations, track continuing education and change renewal forms.

**COMMENTS:**

- 1) **Purpose.** This bill is co-sponsored by the California Pharmacists Association (CPhA) and Equality California. According to the author:

Healthcare providers have a responsibility to maintain their knowledge of the most recent advances in healthcare. [This bill] requires pharmacists and pharmacy technicians to have one hour of continuing pharmacy education (CE) that provides culturally competent care to members of the LGBTQ+ community. This bill will help ensure that pharmacists have the necessary tools to provide care to the LGBTQ+ community.

The Board currently regulates over 47,000 pharmacists, 550 advanced practice pharmacists, 6,500 intern pharmacists and 70,000 pharmacy technicians. Pharmacists are required to earn at least 30 units of continuing education (CE) every two years after their first renewal cycle. Advanced practice pharmacists must earn an additional 10 units. The subject matter is required to be “pertinent to the socioeconomic and legal aspects of health care, the properties and actions of drugs and dosage forms and the etiology, and characteristics and therapeutics of the disease state.”

- 2) **LGBTQ+ Patient Needs.** In 2019, SB 159 (Wiener, Chapter 532, Statutes of 2019) was enacted to authorize a pharmacist to furnish preexposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and postexposure prophylaxis (PEP) under certain conditions. PrEP involves a combination of

two antiretroviral medications that significantly reduce the risk of contracting human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) in high-risk individuals, approved by the federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in 2012. The FDA recommends PrEP for HIV-negative gay or bisexual men who have unprotected sex; heterosexual women who regularly have unprotected sex with partners who are at risk of HIV; and individuals who engage in the use of injectable drugs using shared needles. PEP refers broadly to any medication intended to prevent infection from occurring after exposure to a pathogen.

With many pharmacists now providing critical HIV prevention care, advocates have observed an urgent need to improve cultural competency for pharmacists to better understand the needs of their LGBTQ+ patients. CPhA, a co-sponsor of this bill, explains that CPhA sponsored SB 159, which granted pharmacists the authority to initiate and furnish PrEP and PEP. CPhA notes the Legislature agreed that pharmacists have the proper education and training to provide these life-saving medications; however, the ability to provide care to the LBTQ+ community with cultural humility is of equal importance.

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