



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrew J. Lanza

Senator Andrew Lanza and Assemblyman Dan Quart Introduce Legislation to Improve Patient Care

ANDREW J LANZA May 22, 2014

Medication Synchronization Promotes Efficiency and Helps Patients with Chronic Conditions

Senator Andrew Lanza (Staten Island) and Assemblyman Dan Quart have introduced legislation, bill number S.6763/A.8975, giving patients the ability to pick up multiple medications at their pharmacy on the same day each month. Specifically, the bill provides insurance coverage for the synchronization of multiple prescriptions and dispensing fee standardization by requiring insurers to cover partially-filled prescriptions.

This legislation is designed to improve health care and outcomes for patients with complicated drug regimens and patients who have more than one chronic medical condition. Medication synchronization is a voluntary program initiated by pharmacists in which medication refills are coordinated so that every prescription refill is due on the same day each month. This coordination promotes better patient adherence and also creates opportunities for meaningful clinical interactions between pharmacists and patients.

Consumers who are new to complicated therapies or who need to add another medication to their daily routine benefit from the support and guidance they receive from the one-to-one consultations that are the hallmark of community pharmacy practice.

Pharmacists also derive benefits from medication synchronization programs, namely more efficient and organized workflow and greater focus on individual patients. When every prescription is prepared at the same time the dispensing pharmacist has a better, more complete understanding of the individual patient than would be possible when prescription refills are processed throughout the month.

Senator Andrew J. Lanza said, “This is a win-win situation for both patients and pharmacists. Patients appreciate the convenience of getting all monthly prescriptions from one pharmacy at one time. At the

same time, pharmacists improve efficiency while gaining a better understanding of their patients' profiles. Ultimately this means better patient care and more successful health outcomes which subsequently reduces overall health care expenses"

Assemblyman Dan Quart said, "There is simply no reason to deny seniors and other New Yorkers with complicated regimens of medication the opportunity to streamline their medical care. This legislation will increase patient compliance, ultimately leading to better outcomes for patients and lower costs for all New Yorkers."

Rob Annicharico, pharmacist and owner of Delco Drugs on Staten Island said, "Preparing all prescriptions at the same time gives us a better and more complete understanding of the patient than would be possible when prescription refills are processed throughout the month. We can check drug-to-drug interactions, make sure our patients are sticking to their treatment plan and have a regular conversation about their health. This legislation will increase the level of patient care we can provide for each patient."

"This consumer-friendly bill is intended to make it easier for patients taking multiple medications who wish to pick them up together," said Charles Catalano, President-Elect of the Pharmacists Society of the State of New York.

"The National Community Pharmacists Association (NCPA) is a big proponent of driving greater medication adherence because it improves patient health outcomes and ultimately lowers overall spending," said NCPA CEO B. Douglas Hoey, RPh, MBA. "NCPA members across the country and in New York have embraced medication synchronization, such as the Simplify My Meds program, to coordinate a patient's drug refills into a once-a-month routine combined with a circumspect review by the pharmacist. We are very supportive of efforts by New York State Senator Andrew Lanza and Assemblyman Dan Quart to further enhance this practice through their medication synchronization bill. This is a consumer-friendly way of enabling this common-sense approach to medication adherence."

Sue Shipe, PhD, Executive Director of the International Institute For Human Empowerment, added, "Patients who take multiple prescriptions, especially those who are challenged by physical limitations or without convenient transportation, can only benefit from synchronized refills for their prescriptions. This legislation will allow for improved patient compliance by assisting patients to more easily access, and better organize, their medications. Increased oversight by medical professionals, as well as enhanced patient compliance, will help reduce overall healthcare costs for the patient and for society."

The bill has been referred to the Insurance Committee.

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