

Senate Health and Human Services Committee

Sophie Walsh 271-3469

SB 250, relative to pharmacist administration of long-acting injectable drugs.

Hearing Date: March 12, 2025

Members of the Committee Present: Senators Rochefort, Avard, Birdsell, Prentiss and Long

Members of the Committee Absent: None

Bill Analysis: This bill allows pharmacists to administer certain long-acting controlled drugs pursuant to a prescription.

Sponsors:

Sen. Rochefort

Sen. Avard

Sen. Rosenwald

Sen. Birdsell

Sen. Prentiss

Rep. Grote

Who supports the bill: Sen. Rosenwald, Ben Bradley (NH Hospital Association), Michael Brousseau (Indivior), Jake Berry (New Futures), Elizabeth Sargent (NH Society of Health System Pharmacists & NH Pharmacists Association), and Katherine Welsh.

Who opposes the bill: Valerie Danielson, Maria Boylan, and Nancy Husarik.

Who is neutral on the bill: Michelle Heaton (NH Insurance Department).

Summary of testimony presented:

Senator David Rochefort, Senate District 1

- Senator Rochefort explained that pharmacists follow two chapters of law in statute. Chapter 318, the Pharmacy Practice Act, permits pharmacists to administer drugs. Chapter 318-B, the Controlled Substance Act, defines what pharmacists can do in a very similar manner to Chapter 318, but does not include the word “administer”.
- The goal of this legislation is to reduce ambiguity in statute surrounding what pharmacists are permitted to do, and allow pharmacists to administer controlled substances.
- Senator Rochefort explained that new therapies, which are controlled substances, have been developed that allow patients to receive once-a-month injections that provide the patient’s medication assisted therapy for the month.

- Permitting this action will allow for improved patient outcomes and a reduction in the instances and risks associated with missing drug therapy.
- Senator Rochefort emphasized that community pharmacists are on the front lines of fighting opioid use disorders. Only 55% of people with opioid use disorder receive treatment. Only about 25% of those receiving treatment are able to access medication assisted therapy.
- This bill will increase the amount of people that pharmacists can connect with and treat. Senator Rochefort spoke about this with Coos County Family Health, and they said this would help their community and improve access to treatment.
- Senator Rochefort emphasized that pharmacists are capable. Since 2020, it is estimated that pharmacists have delivered over 1 billion vaccinations. This serves as an opportunity to utilize under-used skills.
- Senator Rochefort explained that an amendment will be needed for Page 3 Lines 13-15. He wants to ensure that pharmacists are paid for this, and the Insurance Department has suggested that the wording be changed to ensure the bill's intent.

Michelle Heaton, New Hampshire Insurance Department

- Ms. Heaton explained that the Department's only concerns were with the aforementioned lines.
- The Department is working with Senator Rochefort on an amendment to ensure that pharmacists are reimbursed when they administer drugs in addition to the reimbursement they receive for the actual drug.