



Your Liver. Your Life.

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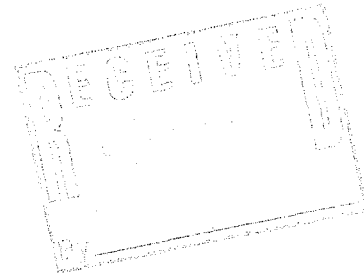
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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

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September 11, 2007

Ms. Melanie Zimmerman, Executive Secretary
State Board of Pharmacy
P. O. Box 2649, Harrisburg, PA 17105-2649

Re: Proposed Change in Rules on Sales of Hypodermic Needles and Syringes

I am writing to express my strong support of the Pennsylvania State Board of Pharmacy proposed changes in rules to eliminate the requirement of a prescription for purchase of syringes in Pennsylvania.

Extensive research has indicated that increased access to sterile syringes is an essential component in effective prevention of blood borne disease, including HIV and hepatitis C. Pennsylvania is the last state in the country to take this important step in reducing disease transmission and this change is long overdue.

Chronic hepatitis C is a serious condition that damages the liver and can lead to potentially fatal liver diseases such as cirrhosis, liver failure and liver cancer. One of the most common reasons for liver transplants is damage caused by hepatitis C infection.

More than four million Americans have been infected with hepatitis C; it is responsible for 8,000-10,000 deaths annually.

The American Liver Foundation encourages the Board to consider removing the restriction on the number of syringes that can be purchased at one time. To effectively reduce the transmission of blood born disease, all injections should be completed with a sterile syringe. Efforts to restrict the number of syringes a person can purchase simply increase the likelihood that syringes will be re-used and run counter to good public health practice. Most other states do not have such a restriction.

I strongly recommend the Board of Pharmacy to eliminate restrictions on sale of syringes and expedite implementation of this revision to the existing regulations as soon as possible.

Sincerely,


Suzanna Masartis

Executive Director, Western Pennsylvania Chapter