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ResearchReport

Connecticut Law on Pharmacists' Provider Designation and Commercial Insurers' Compensation for Services

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Issue

Does Connecticut law (1) specify a statutory definition for the term "provider" or the credentials necessary to seek reimbursement from commercial insurers or (2) allow pharmacists to bill commercial insurers for providing certain services (e.g., administering vaccines or prescribing contraceptive devices or products)? (These questions came from the Pharmacists' Compensation Working Group (see sidebar).)

This report is a companion to OLR reports 2025-R-0120 and 2025-R-0122.

Pharmacists' Compensation Working Group

PA 25-167, § 7, established a working group to study and make legislative recommendations on the compensation of pharmacists who provide services such as administering vaccines, HIV-related tests, or influenza-related tests or prescribing FDA-approved contraceptive devices or products.

Summary

The Connecticut Pharmacy Practice Act designates licensed pharmacists practicing pharmacy in Connecticut as health care providers, but it does not specify a statutory definition for the term "provider" for the purpose of that act.

However, under the insurance law that sets out the minimum information a health care provider must give an insurer when submitting a claim for payment, a "health care provider" is generally defined as any person or entity licensed by the state to provide health care or professional services. Regarding a health care provider's timely submission of claims to an insurer for payment, a related

insurance law prescribes the forms that must be used to submit the claim, the information that must be included, and the timeframe within which the insurer must pay the claim. For the purpose of this law, "health care provider" includes a person licensed to provide health care services under the Pharmacy Practice Act (i.e. pharmacists).

Connecticut law generally authorizes pharmacists to order, prescribe, and administer vaccines; administer epinephrine cartridge injectors; order and administer tests for COVID-19 and influenza; order and administer HIV-related tests and, if negative, prescribe and dispense any HIV-related prophylaxis; and prescribe, in good faith, an emergency contraceptive or hormonal contraceptive subject to certain conditions. However, Connecticut's law does not explicitly provide for a pharmacist to bill a commercial insurance company for these services.

For information on other states' laws that provide for pharmacists to be compensated for their services by commercial insurers, see OLR Report 2025-R-0122. For information on Medicaid pharmacy billing, see OLR Report 2025-R-0120.

Does Connecticut Law specify a statutory definition for the term "provider" or the credentials necessary to seek reimbursement from commercial insurers?

Under the Pharmacy Practice Act, Connecticut law designates licensed pharmacists practicing pharmacy in Connecticut as health care providers, but it does not specify a statutory definition for the term "provider" for the purpose of that act.

However, under the insurance law that sets out the minimum information a health care provider must give an insurer when submitting a claim for payment (CGS § 38a-477), a "health care provider" is defined as any person or entity licensed by the state to provide health care or professional services, or its officer, employee, or agent acting in the course and scope of his or her employment (CGS § 19a-17b).

Pharmacists' Provider Designation

Health Care Provider. Connecticut law recognizes licensed pharmacists as health care providers. Under the law, a "pharmacist" is someone who is licensed to practice pharmacy in Connecticut (see below) and who is thereby recognized as a health care provider by the state of Connecticut (CGS § 20-571 (33)).

Practice of Pharmacy. By law, "practice of pharmacy" or "to practice pharmacy" means the sum total of knowledge, understanding, judgments, procedures, securities, controls, and ethics used by a pharmacist to assure optimal safety and accuracy in distributing, dispensing, and using drugs and devices (CGS § 20-571 (38)).

Licensure Requirements. An applicant for a pharmacist license must be at least age 18 and a graduate from an approved college or school of pharmacy with a degree that was, at the time of graduation, an entry level professional pharmacy degree. The applicant must also have the required professional experience as a pharmacy intern and successfully pass any exams the Department of Consumer Protection (DCP) commissioner requires (CGS § 20-590(a)).

DCP must, upon authorization of the Commission of Pharmacy, issue a temporary permit to practice pharmacy to an individual who:

1. practices under the direct supervision of a licensed pharmacist,
2. has an application for reciprocity on file with the commission,
3. is a licensed pharmacist in good standing in a state or jurisdiction from which the state's pharmacy board or commission of pharmacy grants similar reciprocal privileges to pharmacists licensed in Connecticut, and
4. has no actions pending against the individual's license with any state's pharmacy board or commission of pharmacy (CGS § 20-590(b)).

Statutory Definition of "Provider"

Under the Pharmacy Practice Act, licensed pharmacists practicing pharmacy in Connecticut are designated as health care providers, but the term "provider" is not defined for the purpose of that act.

Under the insurance law that sets out the minimum information a health care provider must give an insurer when submitting a claim for payment (see below), a "health care provider" is defined as any person, corporation, limited liability company, facility, or institution operated, owned, or licensed by the state to provide health care or professional services, or its officer, employee, or agent acting in the course and scope of his or her employment (CGS § 19a-17b).

Credentials to Submit Third-Party Claims

By law, a provider must submit a claim to an insurer on the standard Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA) 1500 or UB-92 form, or a successor form, with the fields identified in statute completed. The insurer and provider can agree to use a different form. The law sets out the

minimum information that must be included in the claim form, including the insured's identification number and name, patient's name, and date of service (CGS § 38a-477).

Insurers and other entities responsible for paying health care providers under an insurance policy must do so within a statutorily specified time after the health care provider's request for payment has been filed in accordance with the insurer's or payer's practice or procedure. If the submitted claim is not complete, the law prescribes a timeframe within which the insurer must (1) notify the health care provider of the alleged deficiencies and (2) pay the claim after receiving the requested information (CGS § 38a-816(15)(B)). (Under this law, "health care provider" includes a person licensed to provide health care services under the Pharmacy Practice Act (i.e. pharmacists) (CGS § 38a-816(15)(C)).)

Does Connecticut law allow pharmacists to bill commercial insurers for providing certain services (e.g., administering vaccines or prescribing contraceptive devices or products)?

Connecticut law generally authorizes pharmacists to order, prescribe, and administer vaccines; administer epinephrine cartridge injectors; order and administer tests for COVID-19 and influenza; order and administer HIV-related tests and, if negative, prescribe and dispense any HIV-related prophylaxis; and prescribe, in good faith, an emergency contraceptive or hormonal contraceptive subject to certain conditions. However, the law does not provide for a pharmacist to bill a commercial insurance company for these services.

Authorized Services

Vaccines. Under the law, pharmacists are authorized to order, prescribe, and administer any vaccine on the CDC adult immunization schedule, or any vaccine not on the schedule provided administration instructions are available on the CDC website, to individuals 18 years and older or 12-17 years old with a parent's, guardian's, or legal custodian's permission or proof of emancipation; or any vaccine pursuant to a verbal or written prescription by a prescribing practitioner for a specific patient (CGS § 20-633(a)(1)).

Epinephrine Cartridge Injector. The law also allows a pharmacist who has completed the requisite training to administer an epinephrine cartridge injector to a patient the pharmacist reasonably believes, based on the pharmacist's knowledge and training, is experiencing anaphylaxis, regardless of whether the patient has a prescription for an epinephrine cartridge injector (CGS § 20-633(b)).

COVID-19 and Influenza Testing. Under the law, pharmacists may order and administer COVID-19 and influenza tests if they are employed by a (1) hospital or (2) pharmacy that has a Department of Public Health (DPH)-approved complete clinical laboratory improvement amendment application for certification for a COVID-19 or influenza test.

They may do so for any patient aged 18 or older. For patients who are ages 12 to 17, they may only do so with (1) the consent of the patient's parent, legal guardian, or other person having legal custody or (2) proof that the patient is an emancipated minor. By law, pharmacists working outside a hospital must comply with any training requirements DCP sets (CGS § 20-633f(b)).

HIV Testing. Pharmacists may order and administer HIV-related tests under substantially similar conditions that apply to COVID-19 and influenza testing (e.g., they must work for a qualifying pharmacy and generally cannot test children under age 12). The law requires pharmacists working outside a hospital to comply with any training requirements set in regulation (CGS § 20-633f(c)).

HIV Prophylaxis. By law, if a pharmacist orders and administers an HIV-related test and the result is negative, the pharmacist may prescribe and dispense to the patient pre- or postexposure HIV-related prophylaxis. The pharmacist may do so only if (1) he or she completed the required training, (2) the patient meets the criteria on the package insert, and (3) prophylaxis is prescribed and dispensed in conformity with the state's pharmacy laws and related regulations (CGS § 20-633f(e)).

Delegation of Authority. The law allows pharmacists to delegate the authority to administer COVID-19, influenza, and HIV tests to advanced pharmacy technicians if the technicians (1) complete any training DCP requires for properly administering the tests and (2) administer the tests under a pharmacist's direct supervision, according to related state law and regulations (CGS § 20-633f).

Emergency and Hormonal Contraception. Under the law, pharmacists are authorized to prescribe, in good faith, emergency or hormonal contraception to a patient under certain circumstances. For example, a pharmacist must first complete an educational training program, accredited by the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education, that (1) covers prescribing emergency and hormonal contraceptives by pharmacists and (2) addresses appropriate (a) patient medical screenings, contraindications, drug interactions, treatment strategies, and modifications and (b) patient referrals to medical providers (CGS § 20-633k).

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