



May 7, 2026

The Honorable Governor Kevin J. Stitt
2300 N. Lincoln Blvd., Suite 212
Oklahoma City, OK 73105
Submitted via email

Re: Support for SB 1565 – Expanding Access to Maternal Health and Nutrition Services

Dear Governor Stitt,

The National Association of Chain Drug Stores (NACDS) urges your strong support for SB 1565, legislation that will strengthen maternal healthcare services for Oklahoma Medicaid beneficiaries through participation in the federal Transforming Maternal Health (TMAH) Model. By authorizing the Oklahoma Health Care Authority to develop, administer, and contract for maternal health supports, including nutrition programs and medically tailored meals, SB 1565 establishes a strong framework to improve outcomes for pregnant and postpartum women. SB 1565 also creates an important opportunity to leverage community pharmacies as part of Oklahoma’s maternal health and nutrition support strategy.

Pharmacies are among the most accessible healthcare destinations in the state and are trusted points of care within their communities. Ninety percent of Americans live within five miles of a pharmacy, and 84 percent of Oklahoma adults report that pharmacists are easy to access.¹ With extended hours and no appointment requirements, pharmacies serve as a consistent and convenient healthcare touchpoint for families and underserved populations.

Pharmacists also play a critical role in managing nutrition-related conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, and cardiovascular disease, which are also key drivers of maternal health outcomes. High-risk Medicaid patients visit their pharmacy far more frequently than their primary care provider, averaging 35 pharmacy visits annually compared to just four primary care visits.² These frequent interactions create meaningful opportunities to identify at-risk patients, reinforce care and nutrition plans, and connect individuals to Food is Medicine interventions such as medically tailored meals and nutrition counseling. Decades of research show that pharmacist-integrated care improves clinical outcomes, and Oklahomans strongly support this role, with 78 percent supporting pharmacist guidance on nutrition and 74 percent supporting pharmacist-led chronic disease prevention.³ According to a report by the Milken Institute, pharmacists are uniquely well positioned to drive better care for patients with chronic conditions, including as an access point to Food is Medicine-related care.⁴

This role is particularly important in rural and underserved areas, where 75 of Oklahoma’s 77 counties are designated health professional shortage areas.⁵ Pharmacies often serve as one of the most consistent and accessible healthcare

¹ <https://www.nacds.org/pdfs/Opinion-Research/NACDS-OpinionResearch-Oklahoma.pdf>

² <https://www.pharmacytimes.com/view/pharmacists-as-influencers-of-patient-adherence->

³ <https://www.nacds.org/pdfs/Opinion-Research/NACDS-OpinionResearch-Oklahoma.pdf>

⁴ <https://milkeninstitute.org/content-hub/research-and-reports/reports/catalyzing-action-pharmacist-provided-food-medicine-care>

⁵ <https://ciceroinstitute.org/research/oklahoma-physician-shortage-facts/>

touchpoints in these communities and SB 1565 provides the flexibility needed for the state to partner with pharmacies to deliver these services efficiently and at scale.

For example, NACDS' Nourish My Health campaign, launched in 2023 to advance nutrition awareness and patient education within community pharmacies, has reached thousands of Americans nationwide. The campaign includes 25 pharmacy partners representing 25,000 pharmacy locations, in addition to national healthcare organizations, and has generated more than 65,000 nutrition security surveys and delivered over 172,000 biometric baseline health screenings across more than 5,000 in-store health kiosks. This important initiative demonstrates pharmacies' commitment to serve as accessible, community-based resources for nutrition support and health education.

NACDS strongly urges your support for SB 1565 to ensure Oklahoma Medicaid beneficiaries have access to innovative, community-based maternal health care, and nutrition support services that improve outcomes statewide. For additional information, please contact NACDS' Mary Staples at mstaples@nacds.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steven C. Anderson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Steven C. Anderson, FASAE, CAE, IOM
President and Chief Executive Officer
National Association of Chain Drug Stores (NACDS)

NACDS represents traditional drug stores, supermarkets and mass merchants with pharmacies. Chains operate nearly 40,000 pharmacies, and NACDS' chain member companies include regional chains, with a minimum of four stores, and national companies. Chains employ nearly 3 million individuals, including 155,000 pharmacists. They fill over 3 billion prescriptions yearly, and help patients use medicines correctly and safely, while offering innovative services that improve patient health and healthcare affordability. NACDS members also include more than 900 supplier partners and over 70 international members representing 21 countries. Please visit NACDS.org.