

NewsRelease

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NACDS Praises Arkansas E-prescribing Law Preventing Opioid Abuse

***Sixty-four percent of Arkansas voters support
e-prescribing requirement as a fraud and abuse prevention strategy***

Arlington, Va.—The National Association of Chain Drug Stores (NACDS) praises the enactment of an electronic prescribing bill (SB 174), for controlled substance prescriptions for Schedule II through Schedule VI, which will help prevent opioid abuse. Arkansas Gov. Asa Hutchinson (R) signed the bill into law March 13, which will become effective January 1, 2021.

NACDS recognizes the leadership of State Sen. Kim Hammer (R), sponsor of the Senate bill; State Rep. Justin Boyd (R), a pharmacist and sponsor of the bill in the House; Kirk Lane, Arkansas drug director; and the Arkansas Pharmacists Association, who were all instrumental in getting the legislation passed.

The legislation enjoys popular and nonpartisan support in the state for mandatory e-prescribing. A January 2019 survey, conducted by Morning Consult and commissioned by NACDS, found that 64 percent of Arkansas registered voters support rules that all prescriptions must be handled electronically, rather than by paper or fax, to reduce the likelihood of fraud and abuse. Only 20 percent indicated opposition.

NACDS President and CEO Steven C. Anderson, IOM, CAE, said: “Fifteen states have enacted e-prescribing legislation as part of the opioid-abuse solution, and we congratulate Arkansas for helping to lead the way on this critical issue.”

President Trump signed into law federal legislation in 2018—the *SUPPORT for Patients and Communities Act* (H.R. 6)—which includes provisions of the NACDS-backed *Every Prescription Conveyed Securely Act*. The new federal law requires electronic prescribing for Schedule II through V controlled substances prescriptions covered under Medicare Part D to help prevent fraud, abuse and waste – with limited exceptions to ensure patient access.

Reflective of the path toward greater use of electronic prescribing as a safeguard, NACDS was on the leading edge of working with the Drug Enforcement Administration to allow electronic prescribing of controlled substances. Until 2010, it was not allowed.

NACDS’ policy recommendations to help address the opioid-abuse epidemic reflect pharmacists’ firsthand experiences on the frontlines of care, as well as extensive

collaboration with law enforcement. In addition to e-prescribing, NACDS' recommendations involve drug disposal, prescription drug monitoring plans, and limits on initial fills of opioid prescriptions for acute pain.

The [policy recommendations](#) issued by NACDS align with consistent and ongoing pharmacy strategies to prevent opioid abuse, including compliance programs; pioneering e-prescribing; drug disposal; patient education; security initiatives; fostering naloxone access; stopping illegal online drug-sellers and rogue clinics; and more.

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NACDS represents traditional drug stores, supermarkets and mass merchants with pharmacies. Chains operate over 40,000 pharmacies, and NACDS' over 80 chain member companies include regional chains, with a minimum of four stores, and national companies. Chains employ nearly 3 million individuals, including 157,000 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.

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