

# NewsRelease

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## **Advocacy, Awards Highlight NACDS RxIMPACT Day on Capitol Hill**

***Pharmacy advocates from all 50 states reach every Congressional office with strategies to reduce patients' out-of-pocket costs, to advance pharmacy value and viability, and to help further address the opioid abuse epidemic***

***Awards recognize NACDS members' strong engagement***

**Washington, DC** – An impressive force of 424 advocates from all 50 states reached every Congressional office during the 2019 National Association of Chain Drug Stores (NACDS) RxIMPACT Day on Capitol Hill. Since its inception in 2009, the groundbreaking event has seen a 200% total participation increase, including representation from 60% of colleges and schools of pharmacy and a total of 4,350 meetings with legislators.

The 2019 program – held March 5-6 – empowered and inspired pharmacy advocates from across the nation to visit Capitol Hill to further advance health policy solutions. With a patient-focused agenda, members discussed with members of the U.S. Senate and U.S. House of Representatives the threat of direct and indirect remuneration (DIR) fees and the urgency for reform. Specifically, advocates made the case for DIR fee reform's crucial role in lowering patients' out of pocket costs and reducing overall healthcare costs.

NACDS members also discussed opportunities for pharmacists to provide additional services given their extensive education, and discussed additional ways to build on longstanding and ongoing efforts to help address opioid abuse and addiction.

"NACDS pharmacy advocates did an amazing job of taking to the entire Congress recommendations on the issues that affect patients in neighborhoods across America," said NACDS President & CEO Steven C. Anderson, IOM, CAE. "Just as pharmacists are highly trusted sources of health and wellness information for patients, these advocates are highly trusted sources of policy solutions for members of Congress. We had outstanding conversations on our key issues and we appreciate the energy and commitment of NACDS members and the engagement of members of Congress and their staff."

In addition to the event's importance in advocating for pro-patient and pro-pharmacy issues, the 2019 NACDS RxIMPACT Day on Capitol Hill served as the site for the announcement of several grassroots and political awards and recognitions. During the

Welcome Dinner on March 5, the NACDS RxIMPACT grassroots advocacy program and the NACDS Political Action Committee (NACDS-PAC) presented four awards.

The first two distinctions went to Douglas Read, director of pharmacy and regulatory affairs, H-E-B, who received the 2019 NACDS RxIMPACT Key Contact of the Year Award; and The Kroger Co., which earned the 2019 NACDS RxIMPACT Leader of the Year Award.

The Key Contact Award recognizes pharmacists who actively engage with members of Congress on pro-pharmacy legislative priorities. Read distinguished himself by being a highly engaged NACDS policy council member; recruiting pharmacists for first-of-its-kind Texas events with legislators; articulating on pro-patient, pro-pharmacy issues; and by being an exceptionally reliable tour organizer.

Nick Gonzales, health and wellness compliance officer and chief HIPAA privacy officer for The Kroger Co., accepted the 2019 NACDS RxIMPACT Leader of the Year Award. The Kroger Co. hosted nearly 20 percent of all 2018 NACDS RxIMPACT Congressional Pharmacy Tours; trained tour hosts to become NACDS RxIMPACT Key Contacts; sent advocates from six states to meet with 40 Congressional offices during the 2018 NACDS RxIMPACT Day on Capitol Hill; and tripled its participation in the event from 2018 to 2019.

NACDS-PAC also presented two Chairman's Inner Circle Awards. NACDS-PAC supports pro-pharmacy and pro-patient Congressional candidates, on a bipartisan basis. NACDS-PAC presented two awards, based on 2018 activities, to:

- Mike Duteau, vice president of business development and strategic relations, Kinney Drugs, Inc.
- Ed Kaleta, vice president of federal government relations and U.S. public policy, Walgreen Co.

See the following resources associated with the 2019 NACDS RxIMPACT Day on Capitol Hill:

[Couldn't Go? Send a Letter Now!](#)  
[Flickr Photo Album](#)  
[Congressional Record Statement](#)  
[Print Advertisement](#)  
[Access Agenda Issue Website](#)

*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](http://NACDS.org).*

***Pharmacies. The face of neighborhood healthcare.***