

## **AIP-Texas Members Continue to Make Their Voice Heard**

Texas pharmacy stakeholders warned the House of Representatives Public Health Committee on Tuesday that Texas' plan to move to managed care for pharmacy services will devastate community pharmacies and the communities they serve.

Richard Beck, R.Ph. executive director of the Texas Pharmacy Business Council is quoted as saying, "Under managed care, pharmacy providers will see an 80% reduction in the dispensing fee for prescriptions. This drastic cut never received legislative approval and will make it impossible for many stores to stay in business. At a minimum, it'll mean pharmacies have no choice but to turn Medicaid patients away."

AIP-Texas member Louis Rumsey R.Ph., owner of Elam Road Pharmacy in Dallas, Texas has traveled to Austin three times in the last two months to provide compassionate, compelling, and insightful testimony on the issue. He told committee members, "I have determined that I will literally go broke trying to keep my pharmacy open. The reimbursement is so low that even if I let go of several employees, cut back on expenses, and did not even pay myself a salary, I still could not stay in business." More than 80 percent of the prescriptions filled at Elam Road Pharmacy are for children.

After Louis' testimony the Deputy Commissioner of Health spoke with him to seek his contact information and to discuss the issue further. Hearings and meetings, such as the HHSC Pharmacy Stakeholder meeting held last week, contribute to providing vital information to legislators and lawmakers on the devastating effects of managed care for pharmacy.

AIP-Texas member and owner of Buda Drug Store in Buda, Texas Tammy Gray noted that other Texas lawmakers are beginning to pay attention to the impact of the cuts. During a Texas Tribune/TribLive event in November, Texas Lieutenant Governor David Dewhurst recognized the need to keep independent pharmacies open and serving Medicaid patients in response to a question asked by Dorinda Martin, R.Ph., owner of Lamar Plaza Drug Store in Austin and Dripping Springs Pharmacy, AIP-Texas member, and president of the Texas Pharmacy Association.

Last Thursday, pharmacy stakeholders, and independent pharmacists from across the state met with HHSC to discuss the pharmacy managed care roll-out. Topics of discussion included transparency in contracting between MCOs/PBMs and pharmacies, HHSC's plan for oversight of PBMs and MCOs, and SB 7 and MTM requirements.

We will continue to provide updates as they occur.

**See news related news articles.**

<http://www.texasinsider.org/?p=57664>

<http://www.wfaa.com/news/texas-news/Pharmacists-warn-that-costs-saving-measures-could-threaten-business-138016718.html>