

Submitter: Rebecca Noad

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

Measure: HB2574

Good Morning afternoon Chair Nosse, Vice Chair Goodwin, Vice Chair Nelson, and Committee Members.

My name is Rebecca Noad and I am the Care Coordination Manager for HIV Alliance, a Eugene-based HIV-services provider. I am testifying in support of House Bill 2574 because I believe that low barrier access to PeP is absolutely critical in the State of Oregon—and I experienced the gaps that exist in our current PEP system firsthand. In October 2020 I was employed as the Prevention and Education Manager at the HIV Alliance. I was called on to help reverse an overdose occurring on our property using intra-muscular Naloxone. During the reversal a co-worker was helping me and a syringe popped out of the individual's thigh and into mine. The individual whom we were attempting to reverse an overdose on was a client of our syringe exchange. As a trained HIV professional I knew there was risk of HIV infection and was extremely frightened and anxious.

I immediately went to urgent care and was prescribed PeP. The urgent care staff attempted to call the prescription into several pharmacies in Eugene/Springfield area but was not able to find a pharmacy that had PEP medications in stock. They called and told me this. This increased my anxiety and fear as I knew that PeP is best started within 72 hours to prevent potential HIV infection. As part of my duties as the Prevention and Education Manager I managed the PrEP/PEP Navigation team. I called upon my PrEP/PEP Navigator in the Salem area to call pharmacies in the Salem area and they were not able to find a pharmacy in the Salem area that had PeP. I then called my PrEP/PEP Navigator in Roseburg who was finally able to find it at a Safeway in Roseburg. I had to drive more than 70 miles from my home, while under great emotional stress and anxiety, to finally obtain PEP.

I am lucky that I had the resources of the HIV Alliance PrEP Navigation team, a car, and financial resources to find and obtain the HIV prevention medication. From my work managing HIV Alliance's PrEP/PEP Navigation team, I know these are resources that many people do not have. I urge the legislature to move HB 2574 forward, to ensure that no matter where they live, Oregonians can get emergency HIV prevention medication when they need it. Thank you.