

MEDICAL BOARD OF CALIFORNIA
LEGISLATIVE ANALYSIS

BILL NUMBER: AB 1710
AUTHOR: Wood
BILL DATE: July 2, 2020, Amended
SUBJECT: Pharmacy Practice: Vaccines
SPONSOR: California Pharmacists Association

DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT LEGISLATION:

This bill would allow authorized pharmacists to independently initiate and administer any vaccine approved by the federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to persons three years of age or older.

On Saturday, August 8, the Senate Business, Professions, and Economic Development Committee approved this bill with an amendment to limit the scope of the expanded authority to administer COVID-19 vaccines. As of Tuesday, August 11, the bill has not been amended.

BACKGROUND:

Under current law, pharmacists who meet certain requirements may independently initiate and administer to persons three years of age or older vaccines listed on the routine immunization schedules recommended by the federal Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), in compliance with individual ACIP vaccine recommendations, and published by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

According to the CDC website, ACIP provides advice and guidance to the director of the CDC regarding use of vaccines and related agents for control of vaccine-preventable diseases in the civilian population of the United States.

Under current law, to be authorized to independently initiate and administer a vaccine, a pharmacist shall do all the following:

1. Complete an immunization training program endorsed by the CDC or the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education that, at a minimum, includes hands-on injection technique, clinical evaluation of indications and contraindications of vaccines, and the recognition and treatment of emergency reactions to vaccines, and shall maintain that training.
2. Be certified in basic life support.

3. Comply with all state and federal recordkeeping and reporting requirements, including providing documentation to the patient's primary care provider and entering information in the appropriate immunization registry designated by the immunization branch of the State Department of Public Health.

A pharmacist administering these immunizations may also initiate and administer epinephrine or diphenhydramine by injection for the treatment of a severe allergic reaction.

The Medical Board of California (Board) supported the 2013 legislation that granted the current vaccine administering authority to pharmacists, as discussed above.

Current law also allows a pharmacist to administer immunizations pursuant to a protocol with a subscriber.

ANALYSIS:

According to the sponsor, "Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the FDA and manufacturers are working to have an approved vaccine by the end of 2020/early 2021. To ensure the safe and complete reopening of the state's economy, it is extremely important that the vaccine [is] quickly deployed and available to California residents. Unless the law is changed, pharmacists will not be able to administer until it has been recommended by ACIP, a process that takes at least six months after FDA approval."

While the stated intent of AB 1710 is to speed access to a future COVID-19 vaccine, the authority granted by the bill is not limited to a COVID-19 vaccine. Rather, it would grant a pharmacist authority to independently initiate and administer any FDA-approved vaccine to persons aged three and older.

According to media reports, numerous COVID-19 vaccines are under various stages of development and clinical trials. As there is currently no approved vaccine, contraindications and the risk of adverse effects, are not currently known.

While the bill would undoubtedly hasten the administering of a COVID-19 vaccine, the Board may wish to consider whether the benefit to public health outweighs potential consumer risk.

FISCAL: There are no Board costs.

SUPPORT: California Pharmacists Association (Sponsor)
American GI Forum Education Foundation of Santa Maria
California Board of Pharmacy
California Chronic Care Coalition
California Hospital Association
California Retailers Association
National Association of Chain Drug Stores

California Society of Health-System Pharmacists
Infectious Disease Association of California
Liver Coalition of San Diego
National Multiple Sclerosis Society
Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons of California
[partial list]

OPPOSITION: A Voice for Choice Advocacy

ATTACHMENT: [AB 1710, as amended, Wood. Pharmacy Practice: Vaccines.](#)
Version: 7/02/20 – Amended Senate