PrEP, PEP & Pharmacists

Legislators in California, Colorado, Missouri and Nevada passed bills allowing pharmacists to prescribe HIV prevention meds.

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When it comes to HIV, many state lawmakers have targeted more than criminalization. Legislators in California, Colorado, Missouri and Nevada passed bills allowing pharmacists to prescribe HIV prevention meds, which, depending on the state, include pre- and postexposure prophylaxis (PrEP and PEP) and related HIV testing. Oregon's governor is expected to sign a similar measure.

Many folks at risk for HIV don't have a regular health care provider, let alone one who is close by and can prescribe meds on short notice. (PEP, a daily regimen taken for 28 days, must be started within 72 hours of a potential exposure and preferably sooner.)

"Not all communities have equal access to these drugs, and we can see the disparities in outcomes for low-income and [minority] communities," said Oregon state Representative Karin Power (D–Milwaukie). The bill, which she cosponsored, "will help to distribute these lifesaving drugs more broadly so that we can begin to close these gaps in our health care system and ensure that more people are protected."

POZ Poll: Should pharmacists be allowed to prescribe PrEP and PEP to prevent HIV? 83% say Yes

10% say No

7% say I Don't Know

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