

**Delaware House of Representatives**

**Rep. Andria Bennett**

**For Immediate Release:**

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**House Passes Bennett Bill to Allow Pharmacists to Treat Ailments**

*HB 399 would implement test-to-treat program, allowing pharmacist to order*

*and perform tests for and treat several ailments*

DOVER – The House unanimously passed a bill Thursday that would streamline and increase access to medical treatment of several common health conditions.

Sponsored by **Rep. Andria Bennett**, House Bill 399 would authorize pharmacists to order and perform tests for and treat several ailments, including influenza, and strep. The practice of pharmacists administering tests and then treating based on the results become more widespread during the COVID-19 pandemic, where immediate and accessible diagnostic services were vital to address the virus.

“What we saw during the pandemic was that local pharmacists are more than capable of performing these simple lab tests and then dispensing the appropriate medical treatment. Given the shortage of primary care physicians Delaware is experiencing, it’s critical that we look for ways for residents to have easy access to the care they need to treat these common ailments,” said **Rep. Bennett**, D-Dover South.

“By implementing this test-to-treat program, we would be increasing access to medical care for thousands of residents across the state who would be able to go to their neighborhood pharmacy to get tested and then receive treatment as needed. This is providing both smart and efficient care for our residents. I’m grateful to the House Health Committee for releasing the bill and look forward to passing it into law.”

All human laboratory testing is regulated under the Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments of 1988 (CLIA). CLIA-waived tests are simple laboratory examinations and procedures that have an insignificant risk of an erroneous result, such as the flu and strep throat tests many residents receive each year.

Under HB 399, a pharmacist could order, test, screen and treat the following conditions: influenza; group A Streptococcus Pharyngitis; SARS-COV-2 or other respiratory illness, condition, or disease; lice; and skin conditions, including ringworm and athlete’s foot.

The bill also would allow pharmacists to test and treat “other emerging and existing public health threats identified by the Department of Public Health if permitted by an order, rule, or regulation.”

“Creating health equity often demands we find innovative, new ways to provide critical services to all communities, including meeting those neighbors where they are,” said **Sen. Marie Pinkney**, the Senate prime sponsor of HB 399. “Finding a primary care doctor in Delaware can be difficult no matter where you live, yet more than 90% of Americans live within five miles of a pharmacy, which frequently offer extended hours on evenings and weekends. I want to commend Rep. Bennett for advancing legislation that will bring health care closer to where it’s needed most, and I look forward to passing this legislation this year.”

HB 399 heads to the Senate for consideration.

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