

Office of Commissioner of Insurance: Governor's Task Force submits recommendations to Improve prescription drug affordability and accessibility

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Madison, Wis. – The Governor's Task Force on Reducing Prescription Drug Prices today submitted its final 2020 report to Governor Tony Evers with recommendations for improving prescription drug affordability and accessibility for Wisconsin residents.

In its report to Governor Evers, the task force outlined numerous policy ideas for reducing costs and expanding access to medications for Wisconsinites. The report also included recommendations for promoting greater transparency within the supply chain and fostering new partnerships to support Wisconsin's most vulnerable populations.

Recommendations from the task force include:

- Capping the copay amount an insurer can charge for insulin
- Increasing transparency in the pharmaceutical supply chain to help identify excessive profits and eliminate waste that harms consumers
- Strengthening consumer protections and anti-trust enforcement of pharmaceutical companies
- Advocating for federal action to end anti-competitive practices that drive

prescription drug unaffordability

- Creating a prescription drug purchasing entity to leverage the purchasing power of public sector employers in order to drive down the price of prescription drugs
- Establishing a statewide repository for unused or discontinued prescription drugs to help provide needed medications for uninsured or under-insured Wisconsinites
- Ensuring that critical safety net providers and community health centers can continue benefitting from discounted drug programs to support patient wellness and community care activities

“Too many Wisconsinite’s continue to struggle to afford their medications. That’s unacceptable. Healthcare—medications or otherwise—should not be a privilege afforded only to the healthy and wealthy,” said Gov. Evers. “I want to thank the folks on this task force for their good work, and I look forward to reviewing their report and working together to tackle rising prescription drug prices.”

“The high cost of prescription drugs continues to place a financial burden on too many Wisconsinites. People shouldn’t have to choose between cutting back on household expenses like food and utilities or forgoing critical medications just to make ends meet.,” said Deputy Insurance Commissioner and Task Force Chair Nathan Houdek. “The recommendations included in this report provide a path forward to help ease the burden on families and individuals who struggle to afford their medications. I want to thank all of the task force members for their hard work and commitment to finding solutions that will make prescription medications more affordable and accessible.”

In addition to providing recommendations, the report also identifies other areas for future consideration and exploration by policymakers, highlights important trends in drug pricing, and includes nearly two dozen letters from interested stakeholders. A full copy of the report can be found

here: <https://oci.wi.gov/Documents/AboutOCI/RxTaskForceFinalReport.pdf>

The report is the culmination of months of work by task force members, who met eight times between November 2019 and August 2020. In the course of its work,

the task force took a comprehensive look at the prescription drug supply chain and its multiple stakeholders, including pharmacists, pharmaceutical manufacturers, insurers, and pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs). The task force heard extensive testimony from consumers and businesses about how the high cost of prescription medications has impacted their lives and livelihoods.

The costs of prescription drugs have continued to increase in recent years, with Wisconsinites spending an estimated \$1.3 billion on prescription medications and supplies in 2019. In response, Gov. Tony Evers in August 2019 signed [Executive Order #39](#) establishing the Governor's Task Force on Reducing Prescription Drug Prices. The task force was charged with analyzing information relating to the development, pricing, distribution, and purchasing of prescription drugs; reviewing actions already taken by Wisconsin and other states to reduce prescription drug prices; and identifying opportunities to coordinate with other states and the federal government.

Members of the public are encouraged to learn more about the work of the task force through its website, <https://rxdrugtaskforce.wi.gov/pages/home.aspx>. The site includes links to [minutes from past meetings](#), [recordings](#), and copies of the presentations delivered to the task force.