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**SENATE BILL 5924**

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**State of Washington**

**69th Legislature**

**2026 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Slatter, Short, Chapman, Conway, Hasegawa, Nobles, Orwall, Riccelli, Saldaña, and Shewmake

Prefiled 12/22/25. Read first time 01/12/26. Referred to Committee on Health & Long-Term Care.

1 AN ACT Relating to expanding prescriptive authority for  
2 pharmacists; amending RCW 69.41.030 and 69.41.030; reenacting and  
3 amending RCW 18.64.011; creating a new section; providing an  
4 effective date; and providing an expiration date.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature is deeply concerned  
7 about Washington's provider shortage, particularly in rural and  
8 underserved communities. Pharmacists are highly trained health care  
9 professionals who are uniquely qualified to prescribe medications and  
10 devices that improve patient access and outcomes. They practice  
11 across many health care settings and routinely prescribe and manage  
12 therapies for chronic conditions, including behavioral health,  
13 addiction, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and autoimmune  
14 disorders.

15 (2) The legislature recognizes that pharmacists earn a doctor of  
16 pharmacy degree, the required standard since 2000, which includes  
17 extensive education focused on medications and the conditions they  
18 treat with a minimum of 1,740 hours of direct patient care in both  
19 community and inpatient settings. Despite over 25 years of advanced  
20 training, the scope of practice for pharmacists in Washington has  
21 remained unchanged. Health care relies upon medications that have

1 grown in complexity and quantity. Pharmacists are highly trained  
2 health care providers that are underutilized. Pharmacists have  
3 extensive training to ensure that complex and expensive medications  
4 are optimally used to improve outcomes.

5 (3) The legislature affirms that pharmacists in Washington have  
6 been prescribing and diagnosing under collaborative drug therapy  
7 agreements since 1979. The 2020 opinion of the Washington state  
8 attorney general confirmed that pharmacists may diagnose pursuant to  
9 these protocols. The Washington state pharmacy quality assurance  
10 commission has no record of patient harm related to pharmacists  
11 prescribing or diagnosing under collaborative drug therapy  
12 agreements, and the legislature finds that pharmacists provide safe,  
13 accessible care.

14 (4) However, the legislature finds that maintaining and filing  
15 the collaborative drug therapy agreements have become an  
16 administrative burden that does not improve oversight or patient  
17 care. To expand access and fully leverage pharmacists' expertise, it  
18 is the intent of the legislature to improve outcomes in both  
19 behavioral and physical health by authorizing pharmacists to practice  
20 to the full extent of their education, training, and experience.

21 **Sec. 2.** RCW 18.64.011 and 2024 c 121 s 30 are each reenacted and  
22 amended to read as follows:

23 The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter  
24 unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

25 (1) "Administer" means the direct application of a drug or  
26 device, whether by injection, inhalation, ingestion, or any other  
27 means, to the body of a patient or research subject.

28 (2) "Business licensing system" means the mechanism established  
29 by chapter 19.02 RCW by which business licenses, endorsed for  
30 individual state-issued licenses, are issued and renewed utilizing a  
31 business license application and a business license expiration date  
32 common to each renewable license endorsement.

33 (3) "Chart order" means a lawful order for a drug or device  
34 entered on the chart or medical record of an inpatient or resident of  
35 an institutional facility by a practitioner or his or her designated  
36 agent.

37 (4) "Closed door long-term care pharmacy" means a pharmacy that  
38 provides pharmaceutical care to a defined and exclusive group of  
39 patients who have access to the services of the pharmacy because they

1 are treated by or have an affiliation with a long-term care facility  
2 or hospice program, and that is not a retailer of goods to the  
3 general public.

4 (5) "Commission" means the pharmacy quality assurance commission.

5 (6) "Compounding" means the act of combining two or more  
6 ingredients in the preparation of a prescription. Reconstitution and  
7 mixing of (a) sterile products according to federal food and drug  
8 administration-approved labeling does not constitute compounding if  
9 prepared pursuant to a prescription and administered immediately or  
10 in accordance with package labeling, and (b) nonsterile products  
11 according to federal food and drug administration-approved labeling  
12 does not constitute compounding if prepared pursuant to a  
13 prescription.

14 (7) "Controlled substance" means a drug or substance, or an  
15 immediate precursor of such drug or substance, so designated under or  
16 pursuant to the provisions of chapter 69.50 RCW.

17 (8) "Deliver" or "delivery" means the actual, constructive, or  
18 attempted transfer from one person to another of a drug or device,  
19 whether or not there is an agency relationship.

20 (9) "Department" means the department of health.

21 (10) "Device" means instruments, apparatus, and contrivances,  
22 including their components, parts, and accessories, intended (a) for  
23 use in the diagnosis, cure, mitigation, treatment, or prevention of  
24 disease in human beings or other animals, or (b) to affect the  
25 structure or any function of the body of human beings or other  
26 animals.

27 (11) "Directed plan of correction" means a plan devised by the  
28 commission that includes specific actions that must be taken to  
29 correct identified unresolved deficiencies with time frames to  
30 complete them.

31 (12) "Dispense" means the interpretation of a prescription or  
32 order for a drug, biological, or device and, pursuant to that  
33 prescription or order, the proper selection, measuring, compounding,  
34 labeling, or packaging necessary to prepare that prescription or  
35 order for delivery.

36 (13) "Distribute" means the delivery of a drug or device other  
37 than by administering or dispensing.

38 (14) "Drug" and "devices" do not include surgical or dental  
39 instruments or laboratory materials, gas and oxygen, therapy  
40 equipment, X-ray apparatus or therapeutic equipment, their component

1 parts or accessories, or equipment, instruments, apparatus, or  
2 contrivances used to render such articles effective in medical,  
3 surgical, or dental treatment, or for use or consumption in or for  
4 mechanical, industrial, manufacturing, or scientific applications or  
5 purposes. "Drug" also does not include any article or mixture covered  
6 by the Washington pesticide control act (chapter 15.58 RCW), as  
7 enacted or hereafter amended, nor medicated feed intended for and  
8 used exclusively as a feed for animals other than human beings.

9 (15) "Drugs" means:

10 (a) Articles recognized in the official United States  
11 pharmacopoeia or the official homeopathic pharmacopoeia of the United  
12 States;

13 (b) Substances intended for use in the diagnosis, cure,  
14 mitigation, treatment, or prevention of disease in human beings or  
15 other animals;

16 (c) Substances (other than food) intended to affect the structure  
17 or any function of the body of human beings or other animals; or

18 (d) Substances intended for use as a component of any substances  
19 specified in (a), (b), or (c) of this subsection, but not including  
20 devices or their component parts or accessories.

21 (16) "Health care entity" means an organization that provides  
22 health care services in a setting that is not otherwise licensed by  
23 the state to acquire or possess legend drugs. Health care entity  
24 includes a freestanding outpatient surgery center, a residential  
25 treatment facility, and a freestanding cardiac care center. "Health  
26 care entity" does not include an individual practitioner's office or  
27 a multipractitioner clinic, regardless of ownership, unless the owner  
28 elects licensure as a health care entity. "Health care entity" also  
29 does not include an individual practitioner's office or  
30 multipractitioner clinic identified by a hospital on a pharmacy  
31 application or renewal pursuant to RCW 18.64.043.

32 (17) "Hospice program" means a hospice program certified or paid  
33 by medicare under Title XVIII of the federal social security act, or  
34 a hospice program licensed under chapter 70.127 RCW.

35 (18) "Immediate jeopardy" means a situation in which a licensee's  
36 noncompliance with one or more statutory or regulatory requirements  
37 has placed the health and safety of individuals or animals at risk  
38 for serious injury, serious harm, serious impairment, or death.

39 (19) "Institutional facility" means any organization whose  
40 primary purpose is to provide a physical environment for patients to

1 obtain health care services including, but not limited to, services  
2 in a hospital, long-term care facility, hospice program, mental  
3 health facility, drug abuse treatment center, residential  
4 habilitation center, or a local, state, or federal correction  
5 facility.

6 (20) "Labeling" means the process of preparing and affixing a  
7 label to any drug or device container. The label must include all  
8 information required by current federal and state law and pharmacy  
9 rules.

10 (21) "Legend drugs" means any drugs which are required by any  
11 applicable federal or state law or regulation to be dispensed on  
12 prescription only or are restricted to use by practitioners only.

13 (22) "License," "licensing," and "licensure" shall be deemed  
14 equivalent to the terms "approval," "credential," "certificate,"  
15 "certification," "permit," and "registration" and an "exemption"  
16 issued under chapter 69.50 RCW.

17 (23) "Long-term care facility" means a nursing home licensed  
18 under chapter 18.51 RCW, an assisted living facility licensed under  
19 chapter 18.20 RCW, or an adult family home licensed under chapter  
20 70.128 RCW.

21 (24) "Manufacture" means the production, preparation,  
22 propagation, compounding, or processing of a drug or other substance  
23 or device or the packaging or repackaging of such substance or  
24 device, or the labeling or relabeling of the commercial container of  
25 such substance or device, but does not include the activities of a  
26 practitioner who, as an incident to his or her administration or  
27 dispensing such substance or device in the course of his or her  
28 professional practice, personally prepares, compounds, packages, or  
29 labels such substance or device. "Manufacture" includes the  
30 distribution of a licensed pharmacy compounded drug product to other  
31 state licensed persons or commercial entities for subsequent resale  
32 or distribution, unless a specific product item has approval of the  
33 commission. The term does not include:

34 (a) The activities of a licensed pharmacy that compounds a  
35 product on or in anticipation of an order of a licensed practitioner  
36 for use in the course of their professional practice to administer to  
37 patients, either personally or under their direct supervision;

38 (b) The practice of a licensed pharmacy when repackaging  
39 commercially available medication in small, reasonable quantities for

1 a practitioner legally authorized to prescribe the medication for  
2 office use only;

3 (c) The distribution of a drug product that has been compounded  
4 by a licensed pharmacy to other appropriately licensed entities under  
5 common ownership or control of the facility in which the compounding  
6 takes place; or

7 (d) The delivery of finished and appropriately labeled compounded  
8 products dispensed pursuant to a valid prescription to alternate  
9 delivery locations, other than the patient's residence, when  
10 requested by the patient, or the prescriber to administer to the  
11 patient, or to another licensed pharmacy to dispense to the patient.

12 (25) "Manufacturer" means a person, corporation, or other entity  
13 engaged in the manufacture of drugs or devices.

14 (26) "Nonlegend" or "nonprescription" drugs means any drugs which  
15 may be lawfully sold without a prescription.

16 (27) "Person" means an individual, corporation, government,  
17 governmental subdivision or agency, business trust, estate, trust,  
18 partnership or association, or any other legal entity.

19 (28) "Pharmacist" means a person duly licensed by the commission  
20 to engage in the practice of pharmacy.

21 (29) "Pharmacy" means every place properly licensed by the  
22 commission where the practice of pharmacy is conducted.

23 (30) "Plan of correction" means a proposal devised by the  
24 applicant or licensee that includes specific actions that must be  
25 taken to correct identified unresolved deficiencies with the time  
26 frames to complete them.

27 (31) "Poison" does not include any article or mixture covered by  
28 the Washington pesticide control act (chapter 15.58 RCW), as enacted  
29 or hereafter amended.

30 (32) "Practice of pharmacy" includes the practice of and  
31 responsibility for: Interpreting prescription orders; the  
32 compounding, dispensing, labeling, administering, and distributing of  
33 drugs and devices; the monitoring of drug therapy and use; the  
34 initiating or modifying of drug therapy in accordance with written  
35 guidelines or protocols previously established and approved for his  
36 or her practice by a practitioner authorized to prescribe drugs;  
37 diagnosing and the prescribing or ordering of drugs and devices based  
38 on his or her education, training, and experience; the participating  
39 in drug utilization reviews and drug product selection; the proper  
40 and safe storing and distributing of drugs and devices and

1 maintenance of proper records thereof; the providing of information  
2 on legend drugs which may include, but is not limited to, the  
3 advising of therapeutic values, hazards, and the uses of drugs and  
4 devices.

5 (33) "Practitioner" means a physician, dentist, veterinarian,  
6 nurse, or other person duly authorized by law or rule in the state of  
7 Washington to prescribe drugs.

8 (34) "Prescription" means an order for drugs or devices issued by  
9 a practitioner duly authorized by law or rule in the state of  
10 Washington to prescribe drugs or devices in the course of his or her  
11 professional practice for a legitimate medical purpose.

12 (35) "Secretary" means the secretary of health or the secretary's  
13 designee.

14 (36) "Shared pharmacy services" means a system that allows a  
15 participating pharmacist or pharmacy pursuant to a request from  
16 another participating pharmacist or pharmacy to process or fill a  
17 prescription or drug order, which may include but is not necessarily  
18 limited to preparing, packaging, labeling, data entry, compounding  
19 for specific patients, dispensing, performing drug utilization  
20 reviews, conducting claims adjudication, obtaining refill  
21 authorizations, reviewing therapeutic interventions, or reviewing  
22 chart orders.

23 (37) "Statement of deficiency" means a written statement of the  
24 deficiencies prepared by the commission, or its designee, identifying  
25 one or more violations of law. The report clearly identifies the  
26 specific law or rule that has been violated along with a description  
27 of the reasons for noncompliance.

28 (38) "Wholesaler" means a corporation, individual, or other  
29 entity which buys drugs or devices for resale and distribution to  
30 corporations, individuals, or entities other than consumers.

31 **Sec. 3.** RCW 69.41.030 and 2024 c 102 s 2 are each amended to  
32 read as follows:

33 (1) It shall be unlawful for any person to sell or deliver any  
34 legend drug, or knowingly possess any legend drug, or knowingly use  
35 any legend drug in a public place, except upon the order or  
36 prescription of a physician under chapter 18.71 RCW, an osteopathic  
37 physician and surgeon under chapter 18.57 RCW, an optometrist  
38 licensed under chapter 18.53 RCW who is certified by the optometry  
39 board under RCW 18.53.010, a dentist under chapter 18.32 RCW, a

1 podiatric physician and surgeon under chapter 18.22 RCW, a licensed  
2 midwife to the extent authorized under chapter 18.50 RCW, a  
3 veterinarian under chapter 18.92 RCW, a commissioned medical or  
4 dental officer in the United States armed forces or public health  
5 service in the discharge of his or her official duties, a duly  
6 licensed physician or dentist employed by the veterans administration  
7 in the discharge of his or her official duties, a registered nurse or  
8 advanced registered nurse practitioner under chapter 18.79 RCW when  
9 authorized by the board of nursing, a pharmacist licensed under  
10 chapter 18.64 RCW (~~to the extent permitted by drug therapy~~  
11 ~~guidelines or protocols established under RCW 18.64.011 and~~  
12 ~~authorized by the commission and approved by a practitioner~~  
13 ~~authorized to prescribe drugs)), a physician assistant under chapter  
14 18.71A RCW when authorized by the Washington medical commission, or  
15 any of the following professionals in any province of Canada that  
16 shares a common border with the state of Washington or in any state  
17 of the United States: A physician licensed to practice medicine and  
18 surgery or a physician licensed to practice osteopathic medicine and  
19 surgery, a dentist licensed to practice dentistry, a podiatric  
20 physician and surgeon licensed to practice podiatric medicine and  
21 surgery, a licensed advanced registered nurse practitioner, a  
22 licensed physician assistant, or a veterinarian licensed to practice  
23 veterinary medicine: PROVIDED, HOWEVER, That the above provisions  
24 shall not apply to sale, delivery, or possession by drug wholesalers  
25 or drug manufacturers, or their agents or employees, or to any  
26 practitioner acting within the scope of his or her license, or to a  
27 common or contract carrier or warehouse operator, or any employee  
28 thereof, whose possession of any legend drug is in the usual course  
29 of business or employment: PROVIDED FURTHER, That nothing in this  
30 chapter or chapter 18.64 RCW shall prevent a family planning clinic  
31 that is under contract with the health care authority from selling,  
32 delivering, possessing, and dispensing commercially prepackaged oral  
33 contraceptives prescribed by authorized, licensed health care  
34 practitioners: PROVIDED FURTHER, That nothing in this chapter  
35 prohibits possession or delivery of legend drugs by an authorized  
36 collector or other person participating in the operation of a drug  
37 take-back program authorized in chapter 69.48 RCW.~~

38 (2) (a) A violation of this section involving the sale, delivery,  
39 or possession with intent to sell or deliver is a class B felony  
40 punishable according to chapter 9A.20 RCW.

1 (b) A violation of this section involving knowing possession is a  
2 misdemeanor. The prosecutor is encouraged to divert such cases for  
3 assessment, treatment, or other services.

4 (c) A violation of this section involving knowing use in a public  
5 place is a misdemeanor. The prosecutor is encouraged to divert such  
6 cases for assessment, treatment, or other services.

7 (d) No person may be charged with both knowing possession and  
8 knowing use in a public place under this section relating to the same  
9 course of conduct.

10 (e) In lieu of jail booking and referral to the prosecutor for a  
11 violation of this section involving knowing possession, or knowing  
12 use in a public place, law enforcement is encouraged to offer a  
13 referral to assessment and services available under RCW 10.31.110 or  
14 other program or entity responsible for receiving referrals in lieu  
15 of legal system involvement, which may include, but are not limited  
16 to, arrest and jail alternative programs established under RCW  
17 36.28A.450, law enforcement assisted diversion programs established  
18 under RCW 71.24.589, and the recovery navigator program established  
19 under RCW 71.24.115.

20 (3) For the purposes of this section, "public place" has the same  
21 meaning as defined in RCW 66.04.010, but the exclusions in RCW  
22 66.04.011 do not apply.

23 (4) For the purposes of this section, "use any legend drug" means  
24 to introduce the drug into the human body by injection, inhalation,  
25 ingestion, or any other means.

26 **Sec. 4.** RCW 69.41.030 and 2025 c 58 s 5123 are each amended to  
27 read as follows:

28 (1) It shall be unlawful for any person to sell or deliver any  
29 legend drug, or knowingly possess any legend drug, or knowingly use  
30 any legend drug in a public place, except upon the order or  
31 prescription of a physician under chapter 18.71 RCW, an osteopathic  
32 physician and surgeon under chapter 18.57 RCW, an optometrist  
33 licensed under chapter 18.53 RCW who is certified by the optometry  
34 board under RCW 18.53.010, a dentist under chapter 18.32 RCW, a  
35 podiatric physician and surgeon under chapter 18.22 RCW, a licensed  
36 midwife to the extent authorized under chapter 18.50 RCW, a  
37 veterinarian under chapter 18.92 RCW, a commissioned medical or  
38 dental officer in the United States armed forces or public health  
39 service in the discharge of his or her official duties, a duly

1 licensed physician or dentist employed by the veterans administration  
2 in the discharge of his or her official duties, a registered nurse or  
3 advanced practice registered nurse under chapter 18.79 RCW when  
4 authorized by the board of nursing, a pharmacist licensed under  
5 chapter 18.64 RCW (~~to the extent permitted by drug therapy~~  
6 ~~guidelines or protocols established under RCW 18.64.011 and~~  
7 ~~authorized by the commission and approved by a practitioner~~  
8 ~~authorized to prescribe drugs)), a physician assistant under chapter  
9 18.71A RCW when authorized by the Washington medical commission, or  
10 any of the following professionals in any province of Canada that  
11 shares a common border with the state of Washington or in any state  
12 of the United States: A physician licensed to practice medicine and  
13 surgery or a physician licensed to practice osteopathic medicine and  
14 surgery, a dentist licensed to practice dentistry, a podiatric  
15 physician and surgeon licensed to practice podiatric medicine and  
16 surgery, a licensed advanced practice registered nurse, a licensed  
17 physician assistant, or a veterinarian licensed to practice  
18 veterinary medicine: PROVIDED, HOWEVER, That the above provisions  
19 shall not apply to sale, delivery, or possession by drug wholesalers  
20 or drug manufacturers, or their agents or employees, or to any  
21 practitioner acting within the scope of his or her license, or to a  
22 common or contract carrier or warehouse operator, or any employee  
23 thereof, whose possession of any legend drug is in the usual course  
24 of business or employment: PROVIDED FURTHER, That nothing in this  
25 chapter or chapter 18.64 RCW shall prevent a family planning clinic  
26 that is under contract with the health care authority from selling,  
27 delivering, possessing, and dispensing commercially prepackaged oral  
28 contraceptives prescribed by authorized, licensed health care  
29 practitioners: PROVIDED FURTHER, That nothing in this chapter  
30 prohibits possession or delivery of legend drugs by an authorized  
31 collector or other person participating in the operation of a drug  
32 take-back program authorized in chapter 69.48 RCW.~~

33 (2) (a) A violation of this section involving the sale, delivery,  
34 or possession with intent to sell or deliver is a class B felony  
35 punishable according to chapter 9A.20 RCW.

36 (b) A violation of this section involving knowing possession is a  
37 misdemeanor. The prosecutor is encouraged to divert such cases for  
38 assessment, treatment, or other services.

1 (c) A violation of this section involving knowing use in a public  
2 place is a misdemeanor. The prosecutor is encouraged to divert such  
3 cases for assessment, treatment, or other services.

4 (d) No person may be charged with both knowing possession and  
5 knowing use in a public place under this section relating to the same  
6 course of conduct.

7 (e) In lieu of jail booking and referral to the prosecutor for a  
8 violation of this section involving knowing possession, or knowing  
9 use in a public place, law enforcement is encouraged to offer a  
10 referral to assessment and services available under RCW 10.31.110 or  
11 other program or entity responsible for receiving referrals in lieu  
12 of legal system involvement, which may include, but are not limited  
13 to, arrest and jail alternative programs established under RCW  
14 36.28A.450, law enforcement assisted diversion programs established  
15 under RCW 71.24.589, and the recovery navigator program established  
16 under RCW 71.24.115.

17 (3) For the purposes of this section, "public place" has the same  
18 meaning as defined in RCW 66.04.010, but the exclusions in RCW  
19 66.04.011 do not apply.

20 (4) For the purposes of this section, "use any legend drug" means  
21 to introduce the drug into the human body by injection, inhalation,  
22 ingestion, or any other means.

23 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** Section 3 of this act expires June 30,  
24 2027.

25 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** Section 4 of this act takes effect June  
26 30, 2027.

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