

# Alaska's Pharmacists: Improving People's Health

By 2025, the U.S. could see a shortage of as many as 31,100 primary care physicians. Even if nurse practitioners and physician assistants are fully utilized, patient needs will not fully be met!<sup>1</sup>

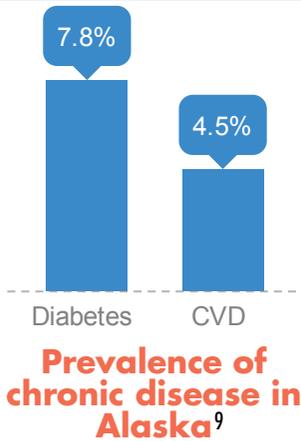
Alaska has 86 designated HPSAs and only 29% of the primary care needs in those areas are currently being met.<sup>2</sup> There are 450 highly trained pharmacists in AK who are ready to provide valuable healthcare services.<sup>3</sup>

## Meeting Patients' Needs in Alaska

**740**  
Thousand  
people<sup>4</sup>

**117**  
thousand people  
living in underserved  
areas<sup>5</sup>

**450**  
Pharmacists  
ready to help<sup>6</sup>



## Diabetes

Diabetes is a complex condition that is often managed by multiple medications. Pharmacists can optimize care and help patients understand their medications and their condition in order to improve outcomes and avoid complications.<sup>7</sup>

## Cardiovascular Disease (CVD)

For patients with uncontrolled high blood pressure, waiting even two months to optimize medications increases the risk of complications, including hospitalizations. Pharmacists are highly accessible members of the care team who significantly improve blood pressure control and can provide timely follow-up and monitoring to improve outcomes.<sup>8</sup>

**37%**  
of Alaska residents  
were vaccinated  
for the flu<sup>10</sup>

Immunization rates across the U.S. have continued to increase since pharmacists began vaccinating.<sup>11</sup>

**19%**  
of people in  
Alaska smoke  
cigarettes<sup>12</sup>

Smoking causes nearly 1 of every 5 deaths in the U.S. each year!<sup>13</sup> Pharmacists are qualified and capable of providing smoking cessation counseling.

**50% of people with chronic diseases do not take their medicines correctly.**<sup>14</sup>



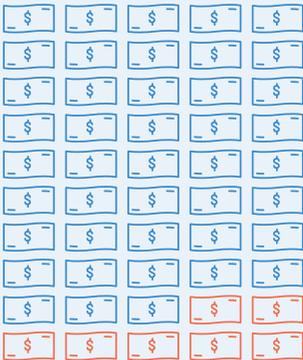
Medications are critical for the treatment of chronic conditions. Pharmacists can help patients use them safely and effectively to avoid medication related problems.



Alaska spends **\$472,000,000** annually on prescription medications.<sup>15</sup>

Investing in pharmacists' services optimizes the use of those prescription medications. Decades of research have proven the value of including pharmacists on healthcare teams. Improved health outcomes, lower costs, and increased access to care could be a reality for Alaska residents if pharmacists were fully empowered to serve as patient care providers.

**Healthcare \$\$ Spent on Chronic Conditions**



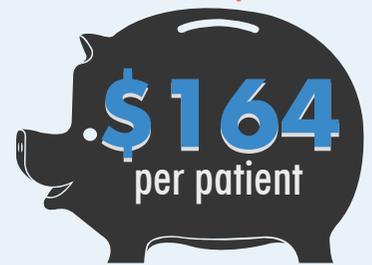
■ Chronic Conditions  
■ Other

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On average  
**\$1,000**  
per patient per year is saved

with pharmacist interventions for patients with chronic conditions.<sup>17</sup>

Pharmacists' counseling and adherence programs can save the healthcare system



in the 6 months following the start of a new prescription medication.<sup>18</sup>

**75% of Alaska hospitals were penalized for high readmission rates.**<sup>19</sup>



when pharmacists provide clinical services after discharge.<sup>20</sup>



**Alaska spent \$631 million on Medicaid in 2016.**<sup>22</sup>

Pharmacists in Ohio delivered a **4.4:1 ROI** when providing medication therapy management services to Medicaid patients. Alaska pharmacists could do this too!<sup>21</sup>

**\$4.40** saved per \$1 spent on pharmacists' services

This information was developed through a collaboration between APhA and NASPA with generous support from the Community Pharmacy Foundation.



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