



KATHLEEN  
**McGUINNESS**  
DELAWARE  
STATE AUDITOR

## ***Strengthening our Frontlines: Securing Provider Status for Delaware's Pharmacists***

---

**What Was Performed?** A special report that reviewed healthcare-related shortages and legislative changes concerning pharmacists' provider status in efforts to protect and expand consumer access to critical services.

---

**Why This Engagement?** Under the Delaware Code, it is the State Auditor's job to offer suggestions to improve efficiency and effectiveness in state government. This special report evaluates national and state legislative changes that can help improve the effectiveness of the state's healthcare systems and prevent any further loss of professional pharmacy services in underserved areas.

### **What Was Found?**

- Healthcare Shortage: There is currently a shortage of roughly 43,000 physicians nationwide, most notably in rural and urban areas.
- Poor Access to Care: 25% of Delawareans live in a Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA), and Delaware ranks 48<sup>th</sup> in the nation for access to care in a designated HPSA.
- Excessive Costs: Delaware has the 5<sup>th</sup>-highest spending in the country per patient, with much of that cost stemming from patients forced to seek medical care at hospitals.
- Legislative Solutions: 37 states have passed reimbursement and provider status legislation for licensed pharmacists to address the healthcare provider shortage. In 2021 alone, 213 bills were introduced in 43 states to codify federal and state emergency authority granted during the pandemic.
- Recommendations: This report contains 3 recommendations and an analysis of benefits of comparable legislative changes for key stakeholders (patients, health plans, and pharmacists).

The new special report, "Strengthening our Frontlines: Securing Provider Status for Delaware's Pharmacists" can be found [here](#).

Under [Delaware Code 2909](#), the State Auditor may produce special reports that examine state agencies' performance and offer recommendations for greater accuracy and efficiency, as well as data, information, and recommendations the auditor deems advisable and necessary.

Please do not reply to this email. For any questions regarding the attached report, please contact State Auditor Kathleen K. McGuinness at [Kathleen.Mcguinness@delaware.gov](mailto:Kathleen.Mcguinness@delaware.gov).

---