



# MONTANA PHARMACY TODAY

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## MONTANA PHARMACY ASSOCIATION SELECTS KRISTIN DIMOND OF BILLINGS AS THE NEW CHAIR DURING ANNUAL MEETING

The Montana Pharmacy Association officially selected Kristin Dimond, currently employed at Billings Clinic as the Inpatient Pharmacy Clinical Coordinator, as the association's new Chair during their 2023 Annual Business Meeting.

Kristin is originally from Malta, Montana and graduated with a Doctor of Pharmacy degree from the University of Washington. She has previously been employed at Sidney Health Center (Sidney, MT) and SCL Health St. Vincent (Billings, MT). Kristin has worked across multiple areas of pharmacy including rural health, oncology, emergency medicine, retail, specialty, and long-term care.

Kristin is most proud of her time as an emergency medicine pharmacist and the positive impact the team she worked with had on patients. One of the primary responsibilities of her current role

includes coordinating IPPE and APPE rotations for around 35 students annually. Kristin also manages the onboarding of new pharmacists, maintaining competency structure and learning modules for the pharmacy. She is an active participant in the residency program, sits on several hospital-wide committees, and continues to work through opportunities for process improvement. ■



## MONTANA'S NEW PHARMACIST PRESCRIPTIVE AUTHORITY LAW – SENATE BILL 112 – GOES INTO EFFECT OCTOBER 1ST

During the 2023 Legislative Session the Montana Pharmacy Association successfully lead the effort to pass a signature bill, Senate Bill 112 (SB 112) that greatly advances the prescriptive authority and services the Montana pharmacy profession can provide across the state. SB 112 was been officially signed by Governor Gianforte in early May and goes into effect on October 1, 2023.

Montana's new Prescriptive Authority Bill is much like the positive law already on the books in Idaho and we understand Alaska and

Washington are gearing up to pursue similar bills in their upcoming legislative sessions.

### WHAT DOES THE NEW LAW ALLOW?

1. A Montana pharmacist may prescribe a drug or device provided a patient-prescriber relationship is established through a documented patient evaluation that:
  - Establishes a diagnoses, if the drug or device is being prescribed, and,

**BILL 112** continued on page 2

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- Identifies underlying conditions.
- 2. A pharmacist's prescribing authority is limited to drugs and devices that:
  - Do not require a new diagnosis, or
  - Are minor and generally self-limiting, or
  - Are diagnosed using a test that is waived under the federal clinical laboratory improvement amendments of 1988.
- 3. Under SB 112 a pharmacist can bill only for assessment services that were necessary, based on the pharmacist's professional judgement
- 4. A pharmacist may not prescribe a controlled substance or an abortion-inducing drug as defined in Montana Law 50-20-703.
- 5. A pharmacist prescribing a drug or device pursuant to SB 112 shall:
  - a. Recognize the limits of the pharmacist's knowledge & experience & consult with other health care providers

as appropriate

- b. Maintain documentation sufficient to justify the care provided.
- 6. SB 112 does not apply to pharmacists who operate within a collaborative practice agreement.

As Passed SB 112 Provides Montana with New Authorities that may include such things as doing test and treat for:

- Influenza, Strep Throat, Lice Control, Smoking Cessation
- Prescribing prophylactic courses for family members
- Asthma inhalers by prescribing a spacer right on the spot
- Renewing glucagon or epi-pens, and much more

**WHAT'S NEXT FOR SB 112?**

Pharmacists prescribing authority will be clarified through Administrative Rules developed by the Board of Pharmacy in the coming months. We understand the board will develop rules that establish "Evidence Based Guidelines for pharmacists." MPA will provide input through this process and will work to educate members this fall about the many new opportunities they have to provide health care services to their patients. ■

**REMINDERS FROM THE BOARD OF PHARMACY****NEW MONTANA RECOVERY PROGRAM**

The Montana Board of Pharmacy transitioned to a new vendor, Maximus, for management of the Montana Recovery Program (formerly Medical Assistance Program). As described on the Program's website at [www.montanarecoveryprogram.com](http://www.montanarecoveryprogram.com), the Program provides monitoring, support, accountability, and rehabilitation of healthcare professionals whose ability to practice safely has been affected by the use of drugs or alcohol, and in some cases, by physical or mental illness. The goal is to help protect the public and return participants to safe, professional practice. The Program also provides services for the boards of medical examiners, nursing, and dentistry. Additional information and FAQs are available through the previous link and through [www.pharmacy.mt.gov](http://www.pharmacy.mt.gov).

**UPDATES TO APPLYING FOR A PHARMACY TECHNICIAN LICENSE**

The Montana Board of Pharmacy's application to be a pharmacy technician has changed to an online only process using one application for a certified license or provisional license (formerly Technician-in-Training).

- If certified by PTCB or ExCPT/NHA, the license will be issued as a full Certified Pharmacy Technician license, PHA-PTE-LIC-###.

- If not certified yet, the license will be issued as a PROVISIONAL Certified Pharmacy Technician license, PHA-PTE-PRV-###, formerly issued as Technician-in-Training (TTR). The provisional licensee has one year to submit proof of certification – DO NOT submit a new application as the same license record will be used to issue a full certified license.
- Character references are no longer required.
- Apply online at: <https://ebiz.mt.gov/pol/Default.aspx>, create an account, select "Start a New License Application", select "New Health Care License", then select Board of Pharmacy and select Certified Pharmacy Technician application from the drop down list. ■



## UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA RESEARCH OPPORTUNITY

### ADVANCING THE CLINICAL INTEGRATION OF PHARMACOGENOMICS IN RURAL AND UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES

Dear Montana Health System Executive, Provider, or Clinical Informaticist:

You are invited to participate in a research project about the application of clinical informatics to pharmacogenomics implementation within your facility. Pharmacogenetic tests use information about a patient's DNA to help select medications that will work the best with the fewest side effects.

You are being asked to participate in this research study because you are in a unique position to provide perspectives about barriers to and facilitators of the use of clinical informatics resources for pharmacogenomics in rural and underserved settings.

Participation in this study involves the completion of a web-based survey (link below). The survey should take less than 10 minutes to complete. Responses will be anonymized prior to data analysis.

By completing the survey, you are giving consent to participate in this study.

The study has been approved by the University of Montana Institutional Review Board (UM IRB). If you have questions related to your rights as a research participant, you can contact UM IRB at 406-243-6672.

The survey can be found here: [https://ucdenver.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_4ToVB5qpx1wYI7A](https://ucdenver.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_4ToVB5qpx1wYI7A).

Thank you for your time and please do not hesitate to contact us (information below) if you have any questions related to this research study. ■

Respectfully,  
Jade A. Bosc-Reiniger, PharmD, MPH, MPA, BC-ADM, AE-C  
(she/her/hers)  
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UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

## APHA WELL-BEING SURVEY – MONTANA RANKING

Over the past few years APhA has been conducting a Pharmacist Well-being Index Survey of all states and Washington DC. With the increased stress facing pharmacists during, and after the pandemic, APhA thought pharmacists would benefit from seeing how the distress percent ranking for each state. Below is the data slide from the report for Montana and other surrounding states. ■



For Every Pharmacist. For All of Pharmacy.

### Changes in Distress Levels – District Seven

As of July 2023



	Change in Distress % Jul 2023 Vs Apr 2023	Distress % Jul 2023	Distress % State Rank Jul 2023	Change in Distress % Apr 2023 Vs Mar 2023	Distress % State Rank Apr 2023	Distress % State Rank Mar 2023	Distress % State Rank Feb 2023	Distress % State Rank Jan 2023	Distress % State Rank Dec 2022	Distress % State Rank Jul 2022	Distress % State Rank May 2022	Distress % State Rank Apr 2022	Distress % State Rank Dec 2021	Distress % State Rank Apr 2021	Distress % State Rank May 2020	Distress % State Rank Apr 2020
Alaska	-0.36%	29.27%	39	-1.14%	37	35 (T)	35 (T)	35 (T)	35	39	38	33	48	49	49	49
Idaho	-0.25%	32.03%	35	No Change	32	32	30	27 (T)	27 (T)	24	22	27	31	34	40	39
Montana	-2.39%	38.24%	12	No Change	10	10	10	11	11	11	11	11	10	12	19 (T)	24
Oregon	0.92%	35.85%	17	0.31%	17	17 (T)	19	21	24	27 (T)	31	29	27 (T)	28	36	37
Washington	-0.35%	43.93%	8	0.83%	7	8	8	8	8	9	8	9	11	11	12	13
Wyoming	-0.77%	19.23%	52	No Change	51	51	51	51	51	52	52	52	52	51	~	~

(T) = Tied rank with another state(s). ~ = Too Few Assessors

Note: Some historic data from 2020/2021/2022 has been removed to allow space for current month. Refer to previous months' reports or contact [ashaughnessy@aphanet.org](mailto:ashaughnessy@aphanet.org) for data.



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# MONTANA PHARMACY TODAY



## SKAGGS SCHOOL OF PHARMACY UPDATES

*Donna Beall, Pharm.D., Interim Dean and Professor, Skaggs School of Pharmacy*

I cannot believe that we have come to the end of another academic year. I want to express my gratitude for your support this year in my role as Interim Dean. I can confidently say this year was a success for the Skaggs School of Pharmacy (SSOP).

We had a lot to celebrate – Hooding Ceremony on May 12th, post-graduate student placement in practice, PGY-1 and PGY2 residencies and fellowships, the Scholarship Ceremony on April 28th, the retirement of faculty, hiring of new faculty, and faculty promotions and unprecedented research funding.

### HOODING CEREMONY AND POST GRADUATE POSITIONS

On Friday May 12th, we celebrated the Hooding ceremony of 54 graduating PharmD students. The celebration was held in the Adams Center in the presence of faculty, staff, graduating class and family and friends. It was a special evening. Brennan Kappes gave a heartfelt speech as the class's representative. Reflecting on the graduating class, the words I chose that best describe them are "Celebrations" and "Overcoming Challenges."

Listening to the bios read during the hooding ceremony, it is noted that nearly every graduate had secured employment after graduation in a variety of pharmacy settings, residencies, and fellowships across the United States. The Class of 2023 achieved a remarkable 80% (12/15) ASHP residency match in phase 1. We had two additional students match to postgraduate residency in phase 2 and one accepted an AMS Fellowship, bringing our overall acceptance to 100%. These results in securing post-graduate trainings and pharmacy positions speak highly of the quality, determination and passion of our students, faculty, and preceptors.

We are so proud of our students who now we can call alumni.

### SCHOLARSHIP CEREMONY

Thanks to the generosity of our donors, students received over \$290,000 in scholarships for the 2023-2024 academic year. I personally appreciate the continued generosity of Montana Pharmacy Association who gifted \$8700 to these scholarships. The amount MPA has sponsored has increased over the years and I am truly grateful for your support to our students.

This year's post-celebration reception was sponsored by Montana Family Pharmacies and would like to thank Mike Matovich for helping us to make this event even more special and providing us an opportunity to interact with each other while enjoying delicious refreshments.

### FACULTY - RETIREMENT, HIRING AND PROMOTIONS

Professor Sarah Miller Pharm.D., M.S., BCNSP retired from the Department of Pharmacy Practice after 35 years of service to St. Patrick Hospital and the School of Pharmacy. Her expertise in nutritional support, commitment to the education of students and graciousness will be missed. We wish her well in retirement.

The Skaggs School of Pharmacy will welcome two new tenure track faculty this summer in the Department of Pharmacy Practice. One a familiar face and a new one. Jenner Minto, Pharm.D. accepted a tenure track position and will continue her expertise in antimicrobial stewardship and responsibilities in the experiential program. David Allen III, PhD will begin his position in Pharmacy Administration. Dr. Allen recently earned his degree at the University of Mississippi. We welcome him to the beautiful state of Montana.

The following faculty were recommended for promotion to higher academic rank or tenure. The evaluation was completed at the School and University levels and is currently pending the approval from the Board of Regents. Monica Serban, PhD. to full professor, Staci Hemmer, Pharm.D., BCPS to Associate Professor and Hayley Blackburn, PharmD. for tenure.

### RESEARCH AND FUNDING

The SSOP reported a total of \$12,607,987.00 in research funding last year. Additionally, the SSOP was notified this month of a 5 year NIH funding of \$3.0 million for the Native American Center of Excellence. Lori Morin, Pharm.D. and Mark Pershouse PhD are the principle investigators for this award. We congratulate them and look forward to the amazing work that will be accomplished with this grant.

I wish all a happy and healthy summer. ■



## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT CONNOR ABEL AND THE MASTERS IN SCIENCE PROGRAM

*By Clint Darlington*

Connor Abel is going into his second year of pharmacy school pursuing his PharmD and Masters in science program at the University of Montana. This dual degree adds a few more classes to Connor's busy schedule along with research credits. To obtain these research credits, he is currently working in Travis Hughes lab at the University of Montana where they are purifying proteins and working with their nuclear receptors to see how their structure can be manipulated. Connor's interest in working on this dual degree came from his interest in research itself. He is hoping that after pharmacy school there may be an opportunity for him to work in drug design or another part of the pharmacy industry. Although this is what he is interested in now, Connor is open to having his mind changed by all the opportunities that the pharmacy field has to offer.

Other than pharmacy, Connor enjoys staying active outside. Being from the Flathead valley he enjoys being on the water, hiking, and camping. He can play the piano and even showed off his talents at the "Skaggs got Talent show" this last semester. Connor tries to stay up to date on different research articles and books that interest him. Connor is a great example of a hard working student at the Skaggs School of Pharmacy. ■



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### MONTANA PHARMACY ASSOCIATION LIKE US ON FACEBOOK

The Montana Pharmacy Association has a Facebook page, available through the Association's website at [www.rxmt.org](http://www.rxmt.org). This MPA feature serves as a popular and easy way for members and anyone interested in Montana pharmacy related issues to stay connected. We hope you will join us!



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## AUDIT TARGET – PRE-FILLED INJECTABLE PENS AND SYRINGES

Pre-filled injectable medication such as insulin, Invega®, Humira®, Enbrel® and Ozempic® remain a big target for audit risk due to their high cost and potential billing pitfalls. One claim error can cost you thousands of dollars. PAAS National® often sees prescriptions for pre-filled injectable medications flagged for recoupment due to one or more of the following reasons:

1. Missing a unit of measure (UOM) or written for a UOM that does not make sense
2. Missing dosage or quantity to inject
3. Missing the route of administration (ROA)
4. Missing calculable instructions/frequency

### PAAS TIPS:

- Here is a Humira prescription example:

For Mary Smith Date 10/04/2022  
 Address 123 Main Street  
**Rx**  
 Humira 40 mg/0.4 mL pen  
 # 1  
 Inject as directed  
 Refills 0  
 Dr. Johnson

- o The quantity of #1 could be interpreted as 1 pen when the box comes as a kit and contains 2 pens
- o There is no UOM, so does the prescriber want 1 box, 1 mL, 1 pen, 1 kit?
- o The SIG does not contain calculable instructions = how much to inject, where to inject (ROA) or how often to inject
- If the pharmacy received this prescription and did not clarify any elements, it would be marked discrepant upon audit.
- Upon receiving this prescription, ideally, the pharmacy would clarify the following elements with the prescriber's office and make a clinical notation
  - o Quantity of 1 = 1 kit or 2 pens
  - o SIG – Inject 40 mg subcutaneously once a week – this clarifies how much to inject, the ROA and how often to inject
- Pay special attention to pre-filled injectable pens and syringes to avoid thousands of dollars of chargebacks upon an audit. ■

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By Trenton Thiede, PharmD, MBA, President at PAAS National®, expert third party audit assistance and FWA/HIPAA compliance.

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**Executive Director:** Marcie Bough, PharmD  
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### Calendar of Events

**September 20-21:** MPA Board Meeting and  
Student Meet and Greet

**October 1:** MPA Dues Renewal

**January 19-21, 2024:** MPA Winter CE,  
Fairmont Resort

**Spring TBD 2024:** Health-Systems Academy  
Spring Seminar

**May 30-June 2, 2024:** NW Convention,  
Coeur d'Alene Resort

### 2024 Continuing Education Offerings

**2024 MPA Winter CE, Fairmont Resort**  
January 19-21, 2024

**Spring Seminar**  
Spring TBD, 2024

**NW Conference, Coeur d'Alene Resort**  
May 30-June 2, 2024