

Renewed efforts from AAFP to repeal OTC provision in ACA

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(HealthDay)—Members of the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) and other medical associations are urging further consideration of Section 9003 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) that requires holders of tax-preferred health care accounts to obtain a physician's prescription to use funds from those accounts to pay for over-the-counter (OTC) medications. The concerns have been laid out in a letter to the chair and the ranking member of the House Committee on Ways and Means.

Consumers depend on OTC medications, which provide a safe, effective, affordable, convenient, and accessible means to address certain health care needs. Based on a recent study, OTC medicines were found to contribute \$102 billion each year in savings and cost avoidance in the health care system, and the availability of OTC drugs provides medicine for about 60 million people who would not otherwise seek treatment. Millions of American families rely on tax-preferred accounts to purchase these medications.

The AAFP notes that section 9003 of the ACA increases costs to the [health care system](#), adds to the burden on physician offices, and causes confusion for consumers who are accustomed to using their tax-preferred accounts for OTC medications. In addition, a majority of pharmacists and physicians believe that this provision in the [health care law](#) will increase the burden on medical professionals.

"We believe the limitation on the use of tax-preferred accounts for the purchase of over-the-counter medicines has resulted in unintended consequences to both physicians and patients and further complicates the tax code," write the authors of the letter.

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