

ICHHP Position Statement - Conscientious Objection to Dispensing Medications

The Illinois Council of Health-System Pharmacists (ICHHP) recognizes the rights of pharmacists and pharmacy technicians (hereafter referred to as “pharmacy professionals”), including an individual pharmacy professional’s right to conscientiously object to dispensing and managing medications they consider morally, religiously or ethically troubling. ICHHP also recognizes that pharmacy professionals and their employers must protect the patient’s right to obtain legally prescribed and medically indicated treatments in a timely manner.

ICHHP supports systems that allow pharmacy professionals to exercise their right of conscience without punitive repercussions. These systems must respect and serve the legitimate health care needs and desires of the patient and shall provide a timely referral without any actions to persuade, coerce, or otherwise impose the pharmacy professional’s moral values, religious beliefs or other ethical objections.

ICHHP encourages a pharmacy professional to proactively inform their employer of known situations that will cause them to exercise their right of conscience so that timely alternative plans may be established.

Examples where pharmacy professionals may be challenged by their conscience include medications for assisted suicide, abortion, emergency contraception, do not resuscitate orders, withdrawal of hydration and nourishment, blood administration, or capital punishment.

Revised 1/23/2024