FRANK D. LUCAS 3RD DISTRICT, OKLAHOMA

2405 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING WASHINGTON, DC 20515-3603 (202) 225-5565 www.house.gov/lucas

DEPUTY WHIP

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives Washington, **DC** 20515-3603

Lt. General Ronald J. Place Director, Defense Health Agency 7700 Arlington Boulevard STE 5101 Falls Church, VA, 22042 Washington, DC 20301

November 02, 2022

Lieutenant General Place,

Every military service-member and TRICARE beneficiary that serves our country deserves to have easy access to Department of Defense military health care and benefits they have dutifully earned. As you are aware, on October 24, 2022, a new pharmacy contract known as TPharm5 took effect. Led by Cigna/Express Script (ESI), one immediate effect of the new contract was the separation of 15,000 independent or community pharmacies from the TRICARE system. In addition to the 15,000 independent or community pharmacies, the severance will impact approximately 400,000 beneficiaries.

Oklahoma is home to more than 290,000 veterans and thousands of active-duty military members and families who depend on TRICARE. I proudly represent many rural veterans who live in Oklahoma's Third District and like many of them, I share deep concerns with recent changes announced by ESI regarding military beneficiary access to pharmacies as outlined by TPharm5. In my district alone, there are over 67 pharmacies who will no longer be a part of the ESI Pharmacy Services Administrative Organization (PSAO's). Enclosed is a list provided by ESI, which provides further details of the list of independent or community pharmacies who are no longer considered in-network through TRICARE. Please keep in mind this list solely covers independent or community pharmacies and does not include numerous pharmacy locations from chain-retail companies such as Wal-Mart who are no longer participating in TPharm5.

I, along with thousands of rural veterans and military beneficiaries who have been impacted by the Department's actions are alarmed there are numerous independent or community pharmacies that may have unknowingly been dropped given the short notice to affirmatively respond to ESI. Our military beneficiaries, and DISTRICT OFFICE:

> 10952 NORTHWEST EXPRESSWAY SUITE B YUKON, OK 73099

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RANKING MEMBER

FINANCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

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DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

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especially our rural veterans, depend on local and independent community pharmacies for medications that are crucial to their health and well-being. Given my strong concerns coupled with critical feedback I've received from my veterans and local pharmacists, I am requesting answers to my questions by Monday, November 14, 2022.

- 1. I am told the original date for execution of TPharm5 was December 31, 2022. Because of concerns of rolling out TPharm5, it's my understanding the decision for implementation on October 24, 2022, was made to avoid disruptions during the holiday season. Instead of rolling out TPharm5 two months early, why wasn't the program delayed by two months to avoid confusion and provide stakeholders more time to prepare for changes?
- 2. If an independent or community pharmacy was unaware of ESI's October 24, 2022 deadline and they are interested in joining TPharm5, what steps is DHA and ESI taking to ensure interested pharmacies are able to re-join?
- 3. Is there data used in the decision-making process for TPharm5 that states military beneficiaries prefer delivery of prescriptions through mail as opposed to a brick-and-mortar pharmacy?
- 4. How were military beneficiaries notified their current pharmacy will no longer be a part of TPharm5? By what methods and how many times were individual military beneficiaries notified?
- 5. Will you commit to DHA hosting a virtual townhall, so they can hear from military beneficiaries, as well as independent and community pharmacies who wish to provide feedback on the implementation process?

I urgently request your response to these questions. Should you have any further questions, feel free to contact my staff, Max Richards, at 202-225-5565.

Frank Lucas

Member of Congress

Enclosed: ESI-provided list of pharmacies no longer covered in OK-03

PHCY_NME	CITY_NME	NO SI	73013	
RITESCRIPTS PHARMACY	EDMOND	OK OK	73013	
CENTRAL OK FAM MED CENTER PHAR	ADA	? <u>Q</u>	74820	
HOBBS PHARMACY	SULPHUR	잊 옷	73086	
ST JOHN EMPLOYEE PHARMACY	TULSA	, Q	74104	
CHEROKEE HILLS PHARMACY	TAHLEQUAH	Q.	74464	
CORNER DRUG LLC	MADILL	Š	73446	
EAST CENTRAL OK FAMILY HEALTH	WETUMKA		74883	
SSM HEALTH PHARMACY	OKLAHOMA CITY	ŠŠ	74136	
CENIRAL RX PHARMACY	VINITA	Š Š	74301	
ASCENSION RX 1600	BARTLESVILLE	OK.	74006	
HOMETOWN DRUG COMPANY	POTEAU	Q	74953	
COMANCHE COUNTY MEMORIAL HOSPI	LAWTON	ž Š	73505	
EUFAULA PHARMACY ASPCARES	OKLAHOMA CITY	è è	73112	
REVANRX	WARR ACRES	QK QK	73132	
ASCENSION RX 1602	TULSA	ę ę	73116	
DOUGHERTY'S PHARMACY MCALESTER	MCALESTER	Q (74501	
C F SOLUTIONS	TULSA	ŎĶ.	74145	
EPIC PHARMACY	OKLAHOMA CITY	Q Ç	74962	
PUCKETT DISCOUNT PHARMACY	MANGUM	Q.	73554	
LONE GROVE PHARMACY	ARDMORE	Ŏ.	73401	
HOOVER DRUG	STIGLER	Q Q	74462	
FAMILY DISCOLING PHARMACY	PONCA CITY	읒 뜻	74601	
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CORNWELL PHARMACY	GUTHRIE BROKEN BOW	ŠŠ	73044	
NEWKIRK DHARMACY	NEWKIRK	읒 ;	74647	
APS PHARMACY	EDMOND	QK QK	73013	
J J PHARMACY GIFTS	CLAREMORE))	74017	
LOVELL'S PHARMACY	ANADARKO	Q Q	73005	
OXFORD PHARMACY LLC	OKLAHOMA CITY	Q Ç	73135	
HOSPITAL DISCOUNT PHARMACY	EDMOND	ŎĶ	73034	
OU HEALTH PHARMACY - OU HEALTH	OKLAHOMA CITY	Q Q	73104	
GREAT PLAINS PHARMACY	WEATHEREORD	Q	73096	
CENTRAL DRUG	STILLWATER	Q (74074	
EXCHANGE PHARMACY	OKLAHOMA CITY	e Q	73108	
CRESCENT DRUG AND APOTHECARY I	WYNNEWOOD	Q Q	74137	
RANDY'S PHARMACY INC	WOODWARD	ŎĶ.	73801	
HITE DRUG	CHANDLER	Q	74834	

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	MUSKOGEE	SAPULPA	BROKEN ARROW	TULSA	OKLAHOMA CITY	TULSA	POTEAU	DUNCAN	ALVA		4.	
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