



Pharmacy-Based HIV Prevention in California *Results of a Statewide Mystery Client Survey*



To increase access to HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), two bills were passed in California to enable pharmacists to prescribe PrEP.

With Senate Bill 159 (2019), California became the first state to pass legislation authorizing pharmacists to independently prescribe (“furnish”) up to 60 days of oral PrEP medication. Senate Bill 339 (2024) expands pharmacist PrEP provision to include all CDC-recommended formulations, enables pharmacists to furnish up to 90 days of PrEP (and beyond under specified conditions), and strengthens requirements that health plans cover the cost of PrEP services delivered by pharmacists.

Five Years Later: Did It Work?

We evaluated the implementation of pharmacist-initiated PrEP services in California in 2025, five years after implementation began under SB 159 and more than one year after SB 339 was enacted to address key implementation barriers.



Hi, can I get PrEP at your pharmacy?

Our Methods

From July to November 2025, mystery “clients” (i.e., trained research assistants) called California community pharmacies to assess the availability of oral and long-acting injectable (LAI) PrEP services.

Our Findings

- Of the **910** eligible pharmacies that were surveyed and retained in analyses, **31** (weighted prevalence: 2.4%) reported offering pharmacist-initiated PrEP services.
- Of those **31** pharmacies, only **5** (weighted prevalence: 0.5%) offered LAI PrEP, which provides 2-6 months of protection.
- Across all census regions and rural-urban and Ending the HIV Epidemic priority jurisdiction classifications, less than 4% of pharmacies reported providing pharmacist-initiated PrEP services.

Significance

- ▶ **Our findings suggest that community pharmacists remain underutilized to provide PrEP despite a favorable policy environment in California and the availability of new long-acting PrEP medications.**
 - This study is the first to assess the implementation of LAI PrEP in pharmacies, finding that **less than 1%** of community pharmacies offered this service.
 - Notably, **half of the pharmacists** in our 2022 survey reported being willing to provide LAI PrEP under enabling conditions, underscoring the potential for pharmacist-initiated LAI PrEP to address gaps in HIV prevention.
 - Efforts to realize this potential are especially pressing in 2026 as the first twice-yearly subcutaneous LAI PrEP medication (Yeztugo) continues its national rollout.