

TESTIMONY OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF HEALTH-SYSTEM PHARMACISTS

January 24, 2023

Chair and Members of the Committee:

I am Tom Kraus, Vice President of the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP). ASHP is the collective voice of pharmacists who serve as patient care providers in hospitals, health systems, ambulatory clinics, and other healthcare settings spanning the full spectrum of medication use. The organization's more than 60,000 members include pharmacists, student pharmacists, and pharmacy technicians. For more than 80 years, ASHP has been at the forefront of efforts to improve medication use and enhance patient safety.

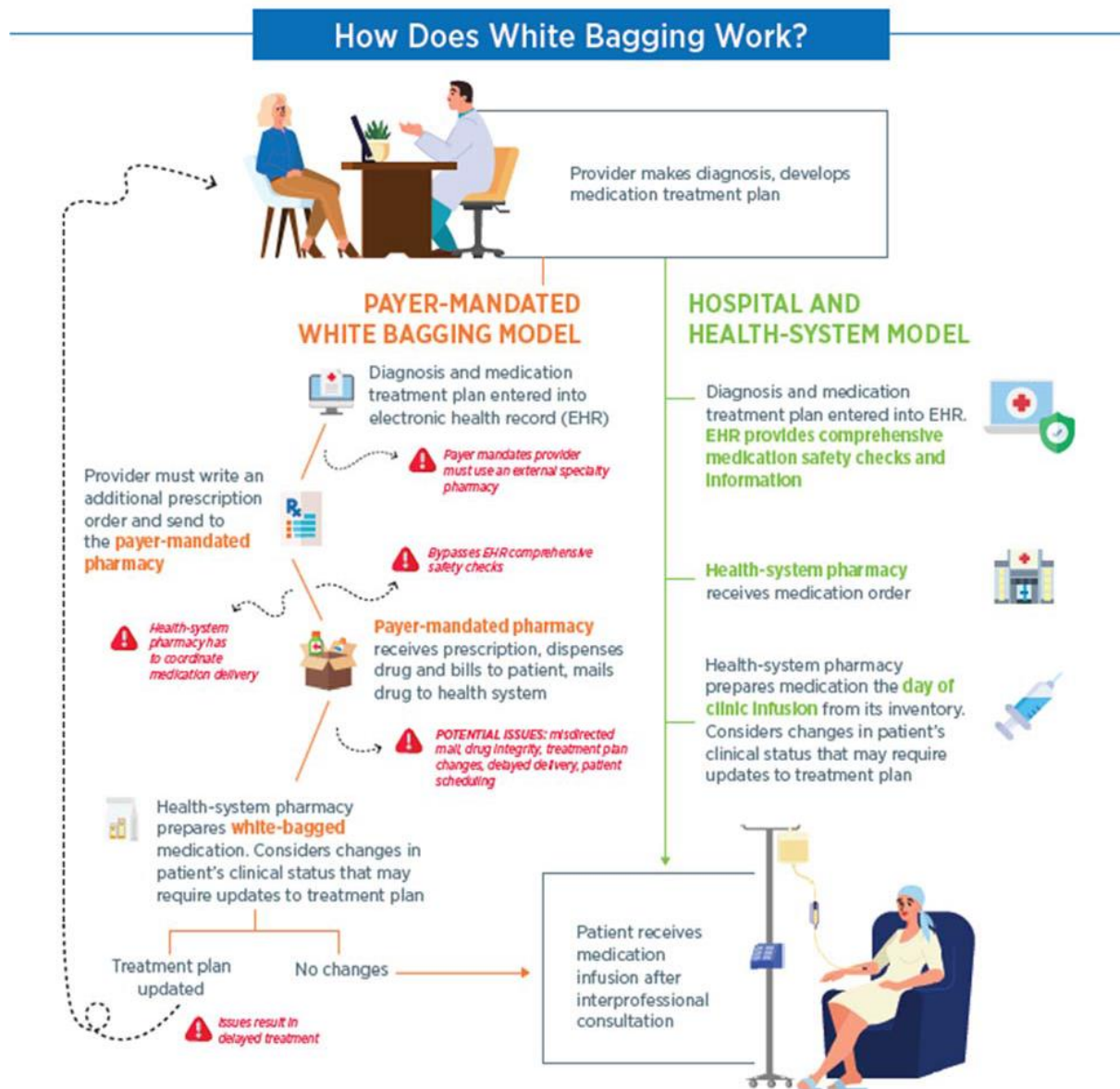
What Is "White Bagging," And Why Is It Dangerous?

Insurer practices that prevent patients from receiving clinician-administered drugs directly from their provider undermine hospitals' patient safety protections and jeopardize patient care. Insurers are increasingly mandating that medications administered by a clinician be dispensed from an off-site pharmacy owned or affiliated with the insurer, and then shipped to the clinician for further preparation and injection or infusion into the patient. This practice, known as "white bagging," allows insurers, rather than physicians and pharmacists, to determine when, where, and how drugs are purchased, prepared, and administered to patients. This can cause **delayed care, difficulty in care coordination, and shipping errors**, while undermining electronic tracking of medications in the patient's medical record, and **introducing multiple new risk points**. Despite patient safety concerns, insurers increasingly require hospitals to administer white-bagged drugs, which they cannot confirm have been stored and prepared safely. Some insurers further complicate this process by sending medications to the patient and requiring them to deliver the drug to their physician, without any guarantee that these specialized medications are properly handled and stored.

Payer mandates that require clinician-administered drugs to be dispensed exclusively via third-party pharmacies compromise provider efforts to ensure patient safety and negatively impact

pharmacists' ability to validate medication integrity and maintain oversight of storage and handling.

As shown in the infographic below, white bagging introduces multiple new risk points in a patient's care plan.



Insurers should not be permitted to unilaterally require medication practices that disrupt patient care and introduce risk into the medication use process. Patients and providers must have the choice to obtain clinician-administered drugs directly from their provider.

House Bill 2715 protects patient safety and ensures that healthcare providers, rather than insurers, make decisions about how best to source, prepare, and administer critical medications to patients.

The American Society of Health-System Pharmacists strongly supports House Bill 2715.