



News from:
COMPTROLLER KEVIN LEMBO

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TUESDAY, MAY 17, 2016

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**COMPTROLLER LEMBO, CT STATE MEDICAL SOCIETY CO-HOST
PHARMACEUTICAL FORUM ON SKYROCKETING DRUG COSTS**

Comptroller Kevin Lembo, with the Connecticut State Medical Society (CSMS), co-hosted a forum in Hartford today that brought together physicians, pharmaceutical companies, academicians, patient advocates and other industry experts to address the skyrocketing cost of medications.

The *CT Pharmaceutical Forum: Access, Affordability & Better Health* focused on how steeply rising drug costs have created hardships for families, employers and states – and served as an opportunity for all sides of the industry to explore ways to improve patient access to affordable prescription drugs.

“Over the past few years pharmacy prices have begun to increase at a much faster pace than overall health care costs,” Lembo said. “The skyrocketing costs are creating financial hardships on employers, consumers and states like Connecticut.

“We’re here today because no good health care policy – or any policy – can come before good data and analysis. The first step is getting every stakeholder in one room, and so that’s what we’ve done.”

As administrator of the state employee health care plan, Lembo oversees the purchase of health care for approximately 210,000 people (about 10 percent of the state’s commercially insured population).

“My office has taken several steps in recent years – through aggressive contracting, the implementation of value-based insurance design and active plan management – to limit wasteful spending,” Lembo said. “As a result, we have managed to keep health care trends

significantly lower than the state and national average. However, controlling both medical and pharmacy costs is essential in order to continue to provide quality benefits, while making other needed state investments.

“At the same time pharmacy costs are rising, new medications are improving the lives of state residents and pharmaceutical research continues to be a significant economic driver. To balance the costs and benefits of pharmaceuticals we need to identify avenues that will continue to encourage innovation and investment in research and development of valuable medications while managing costs.

“Today’s panel will shine light on what is currently happening in the pharmaceutical market, what the future holds and policy options that have the potential to retain costs and improve health outcomes.”

The forum featured two panels – “Industry Perspective on Cost Growth” and “Impact & Options to Limit Cost Growth.”

In addition to Lembo and Henry Jacobs, MD, JD, President of CSMS, the forum featured the following panelists:

- C. Michael White, PharmD, Dean, UConn School of Pharmacy
- Dr. Troy Brennan, Chief Medical Officer, CVS/Caremark
- Thomas Brownlie, Director of US Policy, Pfizer, Inc.
- Tara Ryan, VP of State Policy, PhRMA
- Daniel A. Ollendorf, PhD, Chief Scientific Officer, ICER
- Peter P. Michaud, RN, JD, Associate General Counsel, Maine Medical Association
- Victoria Veltri, JD, Healthcare Advocate, State of CT

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