

Online, Direct-to-Consumer Access to Insulin: Patient Safety Considerations and Reform

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Abstract

The online, direct-to-consumer (DTC) medical marketplace is proliferating more rapidly than regulation is evolving to ensure proper patient safety and public health controls. Along with this growing body of unrestrained medical testing and pharmaceuticals offered DTC online, most types of insulin and insulin administration products may now be purchased without prescriptions or physician guidance. Given the relatively significant risks of insulin use, the abuse potential, the high prevalence of diabetes mellitus, and the rising population of uninsured and underinsured, it is imperative to reform the online DTC medical marketplace to ensure that patient safety and public health are protected.

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Abbreviations: (DTC) direct to consumer, (FDA) U.S. Food and Drug Administration, (NPH) neutral protamine Hagedorn, (VIPPS) Verified Internet Pharmacy Practice Sites

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