



UNITED STATES SENATE  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

October 18, 2012

The Honorable Robert A. Petzel, M.D.  
Under Secretary for Health  
United States Department of Veterans Affairs  
Washington, D.C. 20420

Dear Dr. Petzel,

In recent months, the outbreak of Fungal Meningitis originating from the New England Compounding Center (NECC) has raised serious concerns about the apparent lack of scrutiny and oversight of such compounding pharmacy centers.

Recent alarming information indicates that the Veterans Health Administration purchased roughly \$20,000 worth of drug product from NECC, and more than \$900,000 in drugs and related goods from Ameridose, LLC, a company with the same owners as NECC. I am deeply concerned that these purchases may have exposed veterans to a drug produced by a compounding pharmacy center that was not registered with the Food and Drug Administration and not inspected for safety and effectiveness.

In light of the extraordinarily troubling concerns raised about the safety of drugs manufactured by compounding pharmacy centers, please provide me with information about the monitoring and evaluation of the safety and effectiveness of such products purchased by the Veterans Health Administration. I would also greatly appreciate further information that clarifies exactly how much of the compounded pharmaceutical products utilized by Veterans Health Administration in hospitals, community based out-patient clinics, and other facilities are from compounding pharmacy centers, and further, what internal mechanisms are in place to evaluate the safety of these products. I am sure that you share these concerns.

I will continue to work for all remedies addressing the lack of oversight and safety of drug manufacturing by compounding pharmacy centers like the NECC, which caused the widespread outbreak of a dangerous and deadly disease. I hope that we can work together to ensure that no contaminated drug products reach our veterans and to further strengthen the veterans' health system.

Thank you for your assistance in addressing this matter promptly. I would appreciate either a written response to this letter or a briefing that is made available to my staff.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Richard Blumenthal". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Richard" being the most prominent.

Richard Blumenthal  
United States Senate