

State Board of Dental Examiners

Discussion Draft for Proposed Practice Policy 4.0

Appropriate management of persistent orofacial pain is the treating dentist's responsibility. The use of opioids for other than legitimate dental purposes poses a threat to the individual and society. The inappropriate prescribing of opioids may lead to drug diversion and abuse by individuals who seek them for other than legitimate dental use, often with devastating consequences.

The dental management of pain should be based on the current clinical knowledge and scientific research on the use of pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic modalities. Pain should be assessed and treated properly, and the quantity and frequency of doses, if indicated, should be adjusted according to the intensity, type, impact, pattern, and duration of the pain to optimize treatment outcomes.

Dentists who prescribe opioids should incorporate safeguards into their practices in order to minimize the potential for the abuse and diversion of them. The Board recommends that licensed dentists incorporate, at a minimum, the following safeguards:

- Opioids should not be prescribed to individual who are not patients of record.
- There should be an appropriate dental diagnosis before prescribing.
- A risk assessment of the patient for opioid abuse should be completed prior to prescribing. This assessment should include:
 - Family history of substance abuse, including alcohol, illegal drugs, and prescription drugs;
 - Patient history of substance abuse, including alcohol, illegal drugs, and prescription drugs;
 - Patient's prescription history, including number of prescriptions, frequency of prescriptions, and quantity of drug;
 - Psychological disease, including attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, and depression;
 - Pain history, including treatment for chronic pain; and
 - History of preadolescent sexual abuse.
- Review the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) if there are any concerns of opioid abuse.
- If the patient is under care of a physician, or other prescriber, for pain management, then that physician should be consulted concerning the patient's need for opioid pain medication. Prescribing of opioid pain medication should only be done by the physician or in consultation with the physician.
- Do not prescribe opioids when non-opioids medication is appropriate for the level of pain.
- Do not overprescribe opioids. Make sure the dose, quantity, and refills are appropriate to address acute pain related to dental procedures.
- Communicate to the patient the goals, effects, risks, reasonable expectations, and the potential for chemical dependency when prescribing opioids.

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Discussion Draft for Proposed Rule IX.F

A licensed dentist with a current Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) registration is required to sign-up for and familiarize himself/herself with Colorado's Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP). That licensed dentist is then required to utilize the PDMP when concerned about a patient's risk for controlled substance abuse, including opioids.

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