

Opioid Prescribing Guidelines for Chronic Non-Terminal Pain by Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) and CDC Guidelines

May 24, 2018

Dear Care1st Providers and Office Staff:

These guidelines are intended to reduce the inappropriate use of controlled substances, improve safety, and reduce harm while preserving the vital roles of clinicians and patients in the management of acute chronic pain issues.

Treatment of acute or chronic pain in any setting is challenging. Progress can be made through awareness of opioid prescribing pitfalls. Success can be achieved by putting into practice the following basic principles:

1. Consider all forms of non-opioid treatment to manage the patient's pain
2. Utilize a comprehensive pain management assessment tool
3. Establish realistic treatment goals for pain and function, and only continue opioid therapy if there is a clinically meaningful improvement that outweighs risks to patient safety
4. Assess for substance use, behavioral health issues and risk of opioid misuse
5. Refer member to appropriate specialty services based on assessment
6. Review the AZ Controlled Substance Prescription Monitoring Program (CSPMP) at every appointment prior to prescribing to determine morphine/diazepam equivalent daily dose (MEDD), multiple providers, potential misuse or pain contract violations
7. Request initial urine drug test and then random tests throughout treatment
8. Discuss the rules of the signed pain management contract with each patient
9. Be aware of the risks co-prescribing controlled substances (CS) such as opiates and benzodiazepines together. Do not combine Benzodiazepines, Opiates and Soma.
10. Consider risk reduction strategies, including providing Narcan with instructions for use to members at increased risk of overdose: (MEDD>90, co-prescribed CS)
11. Counsel women of childbearing age prescribed opiates regarding pregnancy prevention.
12. Be aware of the risk of Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome in pregnant women prescribed opiates and need for appropriate referral.
13. Prescribe at the lowest possible dose to achieve treatment goals
14. Counsel patients regarding non-opioid pain management techniques and practices
15. Offer or arrange medication-assisted treatment (MAT) with buprenorphine or methadone in combination with behavioral therapies for patients with opioid use disorder

Please review Clinical Guidelines & Recommendations - Prescribing Guidelines:

- <http://azdhs.gov/clinicians/clinical-guidelines-recommendations/index.php?pg=prescribing>
- <http://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/prescribing/guideline>

If you have any questions regarding following guidelines, call our Pharmacy Team at 602.778.1800 or 866.560.4042 (Options in order: 5, 5).

Thank you!

Care1st Network Management
Ph 602.778.1800/866.560.4042 (Options in order: 5, 7)
Fax 602.778.1875/E-mail SM_AZ_PNO@Care1stAZ.com

Visit our website at www.care1staz.com

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