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NATIONAL SAFETY COUNCIL

Position/Policy Statement

Prescribing Guidelines Based on Best Practices **that may include Opioids**

The National Safety Council believes that physician and dental organizations should develop comprehensive practice guidelines for the treatment of acute and chronic pain. These guidelines should consist of recommendations based on the current knowledge of the risks and benefits of opioid use, as well as the risks and benefits of other non-opioid treatments. They should be updated regularly and should clearly outline steps needed to initiate or continue opioid therapy in order to ensure their effective and safe use and to prevent harm to the patient. ~~NSC also believes that it is important that practice guidelines consider others in society who may be outside of the prescriber-patient relationship who may be affected by the prescribing of opioids.~~

The National Safety Council recommends that prescribers should continue to examine all relevant information to help inform their decisions to prescribe opioids as part of a course of treatment for pain. **Prescribers should: (a) inform and discuss the relevant possible impairing effects and addiction potential of all medications prescribed to patients, (b) consider the need for and importance of monitoring compliance and abuse, and (c) consider the risk of harm that opioids and other drugs pose to others in society outside the prescriber-patient relationship.** In light of studies about the efficacy of prescription opioids for pain as well as the documented risks, all healthcare organizations' prescribing guidelines need to reflect the most current research aligned with best interests for the safety of the patient as well as the safety of the public. **A guideline for prescribing opioids for pain in the United States is available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.**

Reference

Dowell, D., Ragan, Kathleen R. Ragan, Jones, Christopher M., Baldwin, Grant T. & Chou, Roger (2022). *CDC Clinical Practice Guideline for Prescribing Opioids for Pain - United States, 2022, Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR), 71(3), 1-95.*
<https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/71/rr/rr7103a1.htm#:~:text=The%20guideline%20addresse%20the%20following,potential%20harms%20of%20opioid%20use.>

This position statement reflects the opinions of the National Safety Council but not necessarily those of each member organization.

Adopted by the Council, November, 2014

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