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Proposed Rules
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Occupational Licensing Boards and Commissions
FULL TEXT OF REGULATION(S)

Approval of Nurse Practitioners

21 NCAC 32M .0101 - .0106, .0108, and .0110 are being amended for modernization of the language in the rules and processes. 21 NCAC 32M .0107 is being amended to add a continuing education requirement for Nurse Practitioners who prescribe controlled substances. 21 NCAC 32M .0109 is being amended to ensure Nurse Practitioners understand they may not prescribe controlled substances to a patient he or she is having a physical, sexual, or intimate emotional relationship with. 21 NCAC 32M .0117 is being amended to add SOPI Reports C and D to assist with identifying problematic prescribing practices.

TITLE 21 - OCCUPATIONAL LICENSING BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

CHAPTER 32 - NORTH CAROLINA MEDICAL BOARD

SUBCHAPTER 32M - APPROVAL OF NURSE PRACTITIONERS

21 NCAC 32M.0101

21 NCAC 32M.0101 DEFINITIONS

The following definitions apply to this Subchapter:

(1) "Approval to Practice" means authorization by the Joint Subcommittee of the Medical Board and the Board of Nursing for a nurse practitioner to ~~perform medical acts~~ practice within her or his area of educational preparation and certification under a collaborative practice agreement (CPA) with a ~~licensed~~ physician licensed by the Medical Board in accordance with this Subchapter.

(2) "Back-up Supervising Physician" means ~~the licensed~~ a physician licensed by the Medical Board who, by signing an agreement with the nurse practitioner and the primary supervising physician(s), shall provide supervision, collaboration, ~~consultation~~ consultation, and evaluation of medical acts by the nurse practitioner in accordance with the collaborative practice agreement when the ~~Primary Supervising Physician~~ primary supervising physician is not available. Back-up supervision shall be in compliance with the following:

- (a) The signed and dated agreements for each back-up supervising physician(s) shall be maintained at each practice site.
- (b) A physician in a graduate medical education program, whether fully licensed or holding only a resident's training license, shall not be named as a back-up supervising physician.
- (c) A fully licensed physician in a graduate medical education program who is also practicing in a non-training situation and has a signed collaborative practice agreement with the nurse practitioner and the primary supervising physician may be a back-up supervising physician for a nurse practitioner in the non-training situation.

(3) "Board of Nursing" "Board" means the North Carolina Board of Nursing.

(4) "Collaborative practice agreement" means the arrangement for nurse practitioner-physician provides for continuous availability to each other for ongoing supervision, consultation, collaboration, ~~referral~~ referral, and evaluation of care provided by the nurse practitioner.

(5) "Disaster" "Emergency" means a state of ~~disaster~~ emergency as defined in G.S. 166A-4(1a) G.S. 166A-19.3 and proclaimed by the Governor, or by the General ~~Assembly~~ Assembly pursuant to G.S. 166A-6. Assembly.

(6) "Joint Subcommittee" means the subcommittee composed of members of the ~~Board of Nursing~~ and members of the Medical Board to whom responsibility is given by G.S. 90-8.2 and G.S. 90-171.23(b)(14) to develop rules to govern the performance of medical acts by nurse practitioners in North Carolina.

(7) "Medical Board" means the North Carolina Medical Board.

(8) "National Credentialing Body" means one of the following credentialing bodies that offers certification and re-certification in the nurse practitioner's specialty area of practice:

(a) American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC);

(b) American Academy of Nurse Practitioners (AANP); National Certification Board (AANPNCB);

(c) American Association of Critical Care Nurses Certification Corporation (AACN);

(d) National Certification Corporation of the Obstetric, Gynecologic and Neonatal Nursing Specialties (NCC); and

(e) the Pediatric Nursing Certification Board (PNCB).

(9) "Nurse Practitioner" or "NP" means a ~~currently licensed~~ registered nurse who holds an active unencumbered license approved to ~~perform medical acts~~ practice consistent with the nurse's area of nurse practitioner academic educational preparation and national certification under an agreement with a ~~licensed~~ physician licensed by the Medical Board for ongoing supervision, consultation, ~~collaboration~~ collaboration, and evaluation of medical acts performed. Such medical acts are in addition to those nursing acts performed by virtue of registered nurse (RN) licensure. The NP is held accountable under the RN license for those nursing acts that he or she may perform.

(10) "Primary Supervising Physician" means ~~the licensed~~ a physician with an active unencumbered license with the Medical Board who shall provide on-going supervision, collaboration, ~~consultation~~ consultation, and evaluation of the medical acts performed by the nurse practitioner as defined in the collaborative practice agreement. Supervision shall be in compliance with the following:

(a) The primary supervising physician shall assure both Boards that the nurse practitioner is qualified to perform those medical acts described in the collaborative practice agreement.

(b) A physician in a graduate medical education program, whether fully licensed or holding only a resident's training license, shall not be named as a primary supervising physician.

(c) A fully licensed physician in a graduate medical education program who is also practicing in a non-training situation may supervise a nurse practitioner in the non-training situation.

(11) "Registration" means authorization ~~by the Medical Board and the Board of Nursing~~ for a registered nurse to use the title nurse practitioner in accordance with this Subchapter.

(12) "Supervision" means the physician's function of overseeing medical acts performed by the nurse practitioner.

(13) "Volunteer Approval" means approval to practice consistent with this Subchapter except without expectation of direct or

indirect compensation or payment (monetary, in kind or otherwise) to the nurse practitioner.

Authority G.S. 90-5.1(a)(3); 90-8.1; 90-8.2; 90-18(c)(14); 90-18.2.

21 NCAC 32M.0102

21 NCAC 32M.0102 SCOPE OF PRACTICE

The nurse practitioner's scope of practice is defined by academic educational preparation and national certification and maintained competence. A nurse practitioner shall be held accountable by both Boards for the continuous and comprehensive management of a broad range of personal health services for which the nurse practitioner is educationally prepared and for which competency has been maintained, with physician supervision and collaboration as described in Rule .0110 of this Subchapter. These services include but are not restricted to:

- (1) promotion and maintenance of health;
- (2) prevention of illness and disability;
- (3) diagnosing, treating and managing acute and chronic illnesses;
- (4) guidance and counseling for both individuals and families;
- (5) prescribing, ~~administering~~ administering, and dispensing therapeutic measures, tests, ~~procedures~~ procedures, and drugs;
- (6) planning for situations beyond the nurse practitioner's expertise, and consulting with and referring to other health care providers as appropriate; and
- (7) evaluating health outcomes.

Authority G.S. 90-5.1(a)(3); 90-18(14).

21 NCAC 32M.0103

21 NCAC 32M.0103 NURSE PRACTITIONER REGISTRATION

(a) The Board of Nursing shall register an applicant as a nurse practitioner who:

(1) has an ~~unrestricted~~ active unencumbered license to practice as a registered nurse in North Carolina or compact state and, when applicable, an ~~unrestricted~~ active unencumbered approval, ~~registration~~ registration, or license as a nurse practitioner in another state, territory, or possession of the United States;

(2) has successfully completed a nurse practitioner education program as outlined in Rule .0105 of this Subchapter;

(3) is certified as a nurse practitioner by a national credentialing body consistent with 21 NCAC 36 .0801(8); and

(4) has supplied additional information necessary to evaluate the application as requested.

(b) ~~Beginning~~ Applicants who have graduated from a nurse practitioner program after January 1, 2005, ~~new graduates of a nurse practitioner program~~, who are seeking first-time nurse practitioner registration in North Carolina shall:

(1) hold a Master's or higher degree in Nursing or related field with primary focus on Nursing;

(2) have successfully completed a graduate level nurse practitioner education program accredited by a national accrediting

body; and

(3) provide documentation of certification by a national credentialing body.

Authority G.S. 90-5.1(a)(3); 90-18(c)(14); 90-18.2; 90-171.36.

21 NCAC 32M.0104

21 NCAC 32M.0104 PROCESS FOR APPROVAL TO PRACTICE

(a) Prior to the performance of any medical acts, a nurse practitioner shall:

(1) meet registration requirements as specified in 21 NCAC 32M .0103;

(2) submit an application for approval to practice;

(3) submit any additional information necessary to evaluate the application as requested; and

(4) have a collaborative practice agreement with a primary supervising physician who is actively engaged in a practice that mirrors or exceeds that of the nurse practitioner's practice.

(b) A nurse practitioner seeking approval to practice who has not practiced as a nurse practitioner in more than two years shall complete a nurse practitioner refresher course approved by the Board of Nursing in accordance with Paragraphs (o) and (p) of 21 NCAC 36 .0220 and consisting of common conditions and their management directly related to the nurse practitioner's area of education and certification. A nurse practitioner refresher course participant shall be granted an approval to practice that is limited to clinical activities required by the refresher course.

(c) The nurse practitioner shall not practice until notification of approval to practice is received from the Board of Nursing after both Boards have approved the application. received.

(d) The nurse practitioner's approval to practice is terminated when the nurse practitioner discontinues working within the approved nurse practitioner collaborative practice agreement or experiences an interruption in her or his registered nurse licensure status, and the nurse practitioner shall so notify the Board of Nursing in writing. The Boards Board shall extend the nurse practitioner's approval to practice by 45 days in cases of emergency such as sudden injury, sudden illness illness, or death death, or the sudden unavailability of the primary supervising physician.

(e) Applications for approval to practice in North Carolina shall be submitted to the Board of Nursing and then approved by both Boards as follows:

(1) the Board of Nursing shall verify compliance with Rule .0103 of this Subchapter and Paragraph (a) of this Rule; and

(2) the Medical Board shall verify that the designated primary supervising physician holds a valid license to practice medicine in North Carolina and compliance with Paragraph (a) of this Rule.

(f) Applications for approval of changes in practice arrangements and addition or change of primary supervising physician for a nurse practitioner currently approved to practice in North Carolina shall be submitted by the applicant as follows:

(1) addition or change of primary supervising physician shall be submitted to the Board of Nursing and proceeded processed pursuant to protocols developed by both Boards; and Boards.

(2) request for change(s) in the scope of practice shall be submitted to the Joint Subcommittee.

(g) A registered nurse who was previously approved to practice as a nurse practitioner in this state who reapplies for approval to practice shall:

- (1) meet the nurse practitioner approval requirements as stipulated in Rule .0108(c) of this Subchapter; and
- (2) complete the appropriate application.

(h) Volunteer Approval to Practice. The ~~North Carolina Board of Nursing~~ shall grant approval to practice in a volunteer capacity to a nurse practitioner who has met the qualifications to practice as a nurse practitioner in North Carolina.

(i) The nurse practitioner shall pay the appropriate fee as outlined in Rule .0115 of this Subchapter.

(j) A Nurse Practitioner approved under this Subchapter shall keep proof of current licensure, ~~registration~~ registration, and approval available for inspection at each practice site upon request by agents of either Board.

Authority G.S. 90-5.1(a)(3); 90-18(c)(14); 90-18.2; 90-171.20(7); 90-171.23(b); 90-171.42.

21 NCAC 32M.0105

21 NCAC 32M.0105 EDUCATION AND CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR REGISTRATION AND APPROVAL AS A NURSE PRACTITIONER

- (a) A nurse practitioner applicant seeking ~~with~~ registration or first-time approval to practice after January 1, 2000, shall provide evidence of ~~current certification or recertification~~ as a nurse practitioner by a national credentialing body.
- (b) A nurse practitioner applicant seeking registration or approval to practice who completed a nurse practitioner education program prior to December 31, 1999 shall provide evidence of successful completion of a course of education that contains a core curriculum including 400 contact hours of didactic education and 400 contact hours of preceptorship or supervised clinical experience. The core curriculum shall contain the following components:
 - (1) health assessment and diagnostic reasoning including:
 - (A) historical data;
 - (B) physical examination data;
 - (C) organization of data base;
 - (2) pharmacology;
 - (3) pathophysiology;
- (4) clinical management of common health problems and diseases such as the following shall be evident in the nurse practitioner's academic program:
 - (A) respiratory system;
 - (B) cardiovascular system;
 - (C) gastrointestinal system;
 - (D) genitourinary system;
 - (E) integumentary system;
 - (F) hematologic and immune systems;

- (G) endocrine system;
- (H) musculoskeletal system;
- (I) infectious diseases;
- (J) nervous system;
- (K) behavioral, mental health and substance abuse problems;
- (5) clinical preventative services including health promotion and prevention of disease;
- (6) client education related to Subparagraph (b)(4) and (5) of this Rule; and
- (7) role development including legal, ethical, economical, health ~~policy~~ policy, and interdisciplinary collaboration issues.

(c) Nurse practitioner applicants exempt from components of the core curriculum requirements listed in Paragraph (b) of this Rule are:

- (1) Any nurse practitioner approved to practice in North Carolina prior to January 18, 1981, is permanently exempt from the core curriculum requirement.
- (2) A nurse practitioner certified by a national credentialing body prior to January 1, 1998, who also provides evidence of satisfying Subparagraphs (b)(1) - (3) of this Rule shall be exempt from core curriculum requirements in Sub-paragraphs (b)(4) - (7) of this Rule. Evidence of satisfying Subparagraphs (b)(1) - (3) of this Rule shall include:
 - (A) a narrative of course content; and
 - (B) contact hours.

Authority G.S. 90-5.1(a)(3); 90-18(c)(14); 90-171.42.

21 NCAC 32M.0106

21 NCAC 32M.0106 ANNUAL RENEWAL OF APPROVAL TO PRACTICE

- (a) Each registered nurse who is approved to practice as a nurse practitioner in this State shall annually renew each approval to practice with the Board ~~of~~ Nursing no later than the last day of the nurse practitioner's birth month by:
 - (1) Maintaining current ~~North Carolina RN licensure~~; licensure or privilege to practice;
 - (2) Maintaining certification as a nurse practitioner by a national credentialing body identified in Rule .0101(8) of this Subchapter;
 - (3) attesting to completion of continuing competence requirements, and submitting evidence of completion if requested by the Board, as specified in Rule .0107 of this Section.
 - (3)(4) Submitting the fee required in Rule .0115 of this Subchapter; and
 - (4)(5) Completing the renewal application.
- (b) If the nurse practitioner has not renewed by the last day of her or his birth month, the approval to practice as a nurse practitioner shall ~~lapse~~ expire.

Authority G.S. 90-5.1(a)(3); 90-8.1; 90-8.2(a).

21 NCAC 32M.0107

21 NCAC 32M.0107 CONTINUING EDUCATION (CE)

In order to maintain nurse practitioner approval to practice, the nurse practitioner shall maintain certification as a nurse practitioner by a national credentialing body identified in Rule .0101(8) of this Section and earn 50 contact hours of continuing education each year beginning with the first renewal after initial approval to practice has been granted. At least 20 hours of the required 50 hours must be in the advanced practice nursing population focus of the NP role ~~those hours~~ for which approval has been granted by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) or Accreditation Council on Continuing Medical Education (ACCME), other national credentialing bodies, or practice relevant courses in an institution of higher learning. Every nurse practitioner who prescribes controlled substances shall complete at least one hour of the total required continuing education (CE) hours annually consisting of CE designed specifically to address controlled substance prescribing practices, ~~signs of the abuse or misuse of controlled substances;~~ and controlled substance prescribing for chronic pain management. CE that includes recognizing ~~signs of the abuse or misuse of controlled substances, or non-opioid treatment options~~ shall qualify for the purposes of this Rule. Documentation shall be maintained by the nurse practitioner for the previous five calendar years and made available upon request to either Board.

Authority ~~G.S. 90-5.1; G.S. 90-5.1(a)(3); 90-8.1; 90-8.2; 90-14(a)(5); S.L. 2015-241, s. 12F.~~

21 NCAC 32M.0108

21 NCAC 32M.0108 INACTIVE STATUS

- (a) Any nurse practitioner who wishes to place her or his approval to practice on an inactive status shall notify the Board ~~of Nursing~~ in writing.
- (b) A nurse practitioner with an inactive approval to practice status shall not practice as a nurse practitioner.
- (c) A nurse practitioner with an inactive approval to practice status who reapplies for approval to practice shall meet the qualifications for approval to practice in Rules .0103(a)(1), .0104(a) and (b), .0107, and .0110 of this Subchapter and receive notification from the Board ~~of Nursing~~ of approval prior to beginning practice after the application is ~~approved by both Boards~~ approved.
- (d) A nurse practitioner who has not practiced as a nurse practitioner in more than two years shall complete a nurse practitioner refresher course approved by the Board ~~of Nursing~~ in accordance with Paragraphs (o) and (p) of 21 NCAC 36 .0220 and consisting of common ~~conditions~~ and management of these conditions directly related to the nurse practitioner's area of academic education and ~~national~~ certification. A nurse practitioner refresher course participant shall be granted an approval to practice that is limited to clinical activities required by the refresher course.

Authority G.S. ~~90-5.1(a)(3); 90-18(c)(14); 90-18.2; 90-171.36.~~

21 NCAC 32M.0109

21 NCAC 32M.0109 PRESCRIBING AUTHORITY

- (a) The prescribing stipulations contained in this Rule apply to writing prescriptions and ordering the administration of medications.
- (b) Prescribing and dispensing stipulations are as follows:

(1) Drugs and devices that may be prescribed by the nurse practitioner in each practice site shall be included in the collaborative practice agreement as outlined in Rule .0110(2) of this Section.

(2) Controlled Substances (Schedules II, IIN, III, IIIN, IV, V) defined by the State and Federal Controlled Substances Acts may be procured, prescribed, or ordered as established in the collaborative practice agreement, providing all of the following requirements are met:

(A) the nurse practitioner has an assigned DEA number that is entered on each prescription for a controlled substance;

(B) refills may be issued consistent with Controlled Substance laws and regulations; and

(C) the primary supervising physician(s) ~~possesses~~ shall possess ~~a~~ the same schedule(s) of controlled substances as equal to or greater than the nurse practitioner's DEA registration.

(3) The nurse practitioner may prescribe a drug or device not included in the collaborative practice agreement only as follows:

(A) upon a specific written or verbal order obtained from a primary or back-up supervising physician before the prescription or order is issued by the nurse practitioner; and

(B) the written or verbal order as described in Part (b)(3)(A) of this Rule shall be entered into the patient record with a notation that it is issued on the specific order of a primary or back-up supervising physician and signed by the nurse practitioner and the physician.

(4) Each prescription shall be noted on the patient's chart and include the following information:

(A) medication and dosage;

(B) amount prescribed;

(C) directions for use;

(D) number of refills; and

(E) signature of nurse practitioner.

(5) Prescription Format:

(A) All prescriptions issued by the nurse practitioner shall contain the supervising physician(s) name, the name of the patient, and the nurse practitioner's name, telephone number, and approval number.

(B) The nurse practitioner's assigned DEA number shall be written on the prescription form when a controlled substance is prescribed as defined in Subparagraph (b)(2) of this Rule.

(6) A nurse practitioner shall not prescribe controlled substances, as defined by the State and Federal Controlled Substances Acts, for the following:

(A) nurse practitioner's own use;

(B) nurse practitioner's supervising physician;

(C) a member of the nurse practitioner's immediate family, which shall mean:

(i) spouse;

- (ii) parent;
- (iii) child;
- (iv) sibling;
- (v) parent-in-law;
- (vi) son or daughter-in-law;
- (vii) brother or sister-in-law;
- (viii) step-parent;
- (ix) step-child; or
- (x) step-siblings;

(D) any other person living in the same residence as the licensee; or

(E) anyone with whom the nurse practitioner is having a ~~sexual~~ physical, sexual, and/or emotional intimate relationship.

(c) The nurse practitioner may obtain approval to dispense the drugs and devices other than samples included in the collaborative practice agreement for each practice site from the Board of Pharmacy, and dispense in accordance with 21 NCAC 46 .1703 that is hereby incorporated by reference including subsequent amendments.

Authority G.S. 90-5.1(a)(3); 90-18.2.

21 NCAC 32M.0110

21 NCAC 32M.0110 QUALITY ASSURANCE STANDARDS FOR A COLLABORATIVE PRACTICE AGREEMENT

The following are the quality assurance standards for a collaborative practice agreement:

(1) Availability: The primary or back-up supervising physician(s) and the nurse practitioner shall be continuously available to each other for consultation by direct communication or telecommunication.

(2) Collaborative Practice Agreement:

(a) shall be agreed ~~upon and upon, signed~~ signed, and dated by both the primary supervising physician and the nurse practitioner, and maintained in each practice site;

(b) shall be reviewed at least yearly. This review shall be acknowledged by a dated signature sheet, signed by both the primary supervising physician and the nurse practitioner, appended to the collaborative practice ~~agreement~~ agreement, and available for inspection by members or agents of either Board;

(c) shall include the drugs, devices, medical treatments, ~~tests~~ tests, and procedures that may be prescribed, ~~ordered~~ ordered, and performed by the nurse practitioner consistent with Rule .0109 of this Subchapter; and

(d) shall include a pre-determined plan for emergency services.

(3) The nurse practitioner shall demonstrate the ability to perform medical acts as outlined in the collaborative practice

agreement upon request by members or agents of either Board.

(4) Quality Improvement Process:

(a) The primary supervising physician and the nurse practitioner shall develop a process for the ongoing review of the care provided in each practice site including a written plan for evaluating the quality of care provided for one or more frequently encountered clinical problems.

(b) This plan shall include a description of the clinical problem(s), an evaluation of the current treatment interventions, and if needed, a plan for improving outcomes within an identified time-frame.

(c) The quality improvement process shall include scheduled meetings between the primary supervising physician and the nurse practitioner at least every six months. Documentation for each meeting shall:

(i) identify clinical problems discussed, including progress toward improving outcomes as stated in Subparagraph (d)(2) of this Rule, and recommendations, if any, for changes in treatment plan(s);

(ii) be signed and dated by those who attended; and

(iii) be available for review by members or agents of either Board for the previous five calendar years and be retained by both the nurse practitioner and primary supervising physician.

(5) Nurse Practitioner-Physician Consultation. The following requirements establish the minimum standards for consultation between the nurse practitioner and primary supervising physician(s):

(a) During the first six months of a collaborative practice agreement between a nurse practitioner and the primary supervising physician, there shall be monthly meetings for the first six months to discuss practice relevant clinical issues and quality improvement measures.

(b) Documentation of the meetings shall:

(i) identify clinical issues discussed and actions taken;

(ii) be signed and dated by those who attended; and

(iii) be available for review by members or agents of either Board for the previous five calendar years and be retained by both the nurse practitioner and primary supervising physician.

Authority G.S. 90-5.1(a)(3); 90-8.1; 90-8.2; 90-18(14); 90-18.2; 90-171.23(14).

21 NCAC 32M.0117

21 NCAC 32M.0117 REPORTING CRITERIA

(a) The Department of Health and Human Services ("Department") may report to the North Carolina Board of Nursing ("Board of Nursing") ("Board") information regarding the prescribing practices of those nurse practitioners ("prescribers") whose prescribing:

(1) falls within the top two percent of those prescribing 100 morphine milligram equivalents ("MME") per patient per day; or

(2) falls within the top two percent of those prescribing 100 MME's per patient per day in combination with any benzodiazepine and who are within the top one percent of all controlled substance prescribers by volume.

(b) In addition, the Department may report to the Board of Nursing information regarding prescribers who have had two or

more patient deaths in the preceding 12 months due to opioid poisoning where the prescribers authorized more than 30 tablets of an opioid to the decedent and the prescriptions were written within 60 days of the patient deaths.

(c) In addition, the Department may report to the Board information regarding prescribers who meet three or more of the following criteria, if there are a minimum of five patients for each criterion:

(1) at least 25 percent of the prescriber's patients receiving opioids reside 100 miles or greater from the prescriber's practice location;

(2) the prescriber had more than 25 percent of patients receiving the same opioids and benzodiazepine combination;

(3) the prescriber had 75 percent of patients receiving opioids self-pay for the prescriptions;

(4) the prescriber had 90 percent or more of patients in a three-month period that received an opioid prescription that overlapped with another opioid prescription for at least one week;

(5) More than 50 percent of the prescriber's patients received opioid doses of 100 MME or greater per day excluding office-based treatment medications; and

(6) the prescriber had at least 25 percent of patients who used three or more pharmacies within a three-month period to obtain opioids regardless of the prescriber.

(d) In addition, the Department may report to the Board information regarding prescribers who authorize a prescription for opioids to at least one patient where the prescribing meets the following criteria:

(1) The prescription is for 100 MME or greater;

(2) The prescription is for 30 or more days;

(3) The patient has not received a prescription for an opioid from any prescriber in the six months prior to the prescription in question as demonstrated in the North Carolina Controlled Substances Reporting System at the time the prescription was authorized and as reported by the patient.

(e) The Department may submit these reports to the Board of Nursing upon request and may include the information described in G.S. 90-113.73(b).

(f) The reports and communications between the Department and the Board of Nursing shall remain confidential pursuant to G.S. 90-16 and G.S. 90-113.74.

Authority G.S. 90-5.1(a)(3); 90-18.2; 90-113.74.