Washington’s Pain Management Rules
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Kristi Weeks, Director, Office of Legal Services
Washington Department of Health
Purpose of the Rules

The 2010 Legislature passed ESHB 2876 in response to concerns about prescribing opioids for chronic noncancer pain management:

• Opioid prescribing overall is on the rise
• Opioid related deaths and overdoses were on the rise
• High profile regulatory actions
Requirements

Five boards and commissions must adopt pain management rules which include:

- Dosing criteria
- Exceptions to the dosage criteria
- Methods to enhance the availability of consultations
Requirements, cont.

• Guidance on tracking clinical progress
• Guidance on tracking the use of opioids
• Minimizing burden on practitioners and patients

The rules must be adopted by June 30, 2011.
Partners

The boards and commissions must consult with the:

• Agency Medical Director Group (AMDG)
• University of Washington
• Largest state professional association for each of the regulated professions
Collaborative Workgroup

- Included members from each of the five boards and commissions
- Held five public workgroup meetings between June and October 2010
- Provided opportunities for stakeholder input
- Reached consensus for a single set of pattern rules
Final Rules

- Intent and exclusions
- Definitions
- Patient evaluation, treatment plan, informed consent, written agreement for treatment, and periodic review
- Long-acting opioids
- Episodic care
Final Rules, cont.

- Pain management specialist consultation
  - Exemptions based on special or exigent circumstances
  - Exemptions based on practitioner education or experience
- Identification of pain management specialists
Challenges

• Practitioners want autonomy when treating patients
• Practitioners and patients perceive interference with practitioner/patient relationship
• Practitioners fear disciplinary action for the slightest violation of the rules
• Patients fear they will lose access to medication
• Lack of pain management specialists
Next Steps

• The boards and commissions continue to work with the professional associations to provide education to practitioners

• The department provides educational tools for practitioners and patients:
  • Informational brochures
  • Ongoing updates to the pain management webpage
Current Information Available

• Department of Health Pain Management web page: http://www.doh.wa.gov/hsqa/Professions/PainManagement/
  • Links to existing rules and ESHB 2876
  • FAQs
  • Patient brochure
  • Practitioner resources
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