



E-News Update April 2021

Important Notice to All Licensees Regarding Fraudulent Prescriptions

The Board has been made aware of an increasing number of fraudulent prescriptions for promethazine/codeine being dispensed at this time.

These fraudulent prescriptions are generated using two primary techniques.

- Phone-in prescriptions: Suspects will download apps to generate VoIP phone numbers, which are then used to impersonate prescribers and fictitious patients. The suspects then call pharmacies and order promethazine/codeine, accompanied with a non-controlled substance (CS) such as Flonase®, an inhaler, prednisone, or an antibiotic. The suspect provides a Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) number, a National Provider Identifier number, and in many instances, a diagnosis code. The caller also provides a generated number for the "patient." Unsuspecting pharmacies then call the "patient" once the prescription is filled, and the "patient" typically tells the pharmacy that a relative will pick it up. Pharmacies sometimes call the number left for the prescriber to verify that the prescription is valid, and they end up speaking with the suspect again.
- Paper prescriptions: Suspects may produce fraudulent prescriptions on valid Rx paper. To help combat these fraudulent prescriptions, it is recommended that pharmacies verify promethazine/ codeine prescriptions with the practitioner's office by means other than the phone numbers provided on the prescriptions.

Pharmacies and/or pharmacists should report all incidents of prescription fraud to the Board, and they must report such activity to local law enforcement.

Reports to the Board may be filed online by visiting www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/complaint

Board Announces Pharmacist Workload Advisory Committee

At the April Board meeting, the Board approved the creation of a Pharmacist Workload Committee.

The purpose of the advisory committee is to promote patient safety and compliance with Ohio laws and rules by analyzing survey and other data and make recommendations to the Board to address pharmacist working conditions. Committee recommendations may include changes to Board of Pharmacy rules as well as statutory changes.

More information about the committee, including the survey results, can be found [here](#). Information about the committee and upcoming meetings will be sent out in the coming weeks.

HHS Releases New Buprenorphine Practice Guidelines, Expanding Access to Treatment for Opioid Use Disorder

In an effort to get evidenced-based treatment to more Americans with opioid use disorder, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is releasing new buprenorphine practice guidelines that among other things, remove a longtime requirement tied to training, which some practitioners have cited as a barrier to treating more people.

Signed by HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra, the [Practice Guidelines for the Administration of Buprenorphine for Treating Opioid Use Disorder](#) exempt eligible physicians, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, clinical nurse specialists, certified registered nurse anesthetists and certified nurse midwives from federal certification requirements related to training, counseling and other ancillary services that are part of the process for obtaining a waiver to treat up to 30 patients with buprenorphine.

Prescribers and pharmacists may find more information about the exemption at [Quick Start Guide](#) and [FAQs](#).

REMINDER: Terminal Distributor License Renewal

In response to the COVID-19 outbreak, the Ohio General Assembly passed HB 404, which requires all licenses/registrations set to expire on or before April 1, 2021 to be extended until July 1, 2021. Terminal distributors of dangerous drugs (TDDDs) who are set to expire on March 31, 2021 will have their expiration dates extended to July 1, 2021.

The renewal period is now open, and it is highly recommended to renew as soon as possible. Any license renewed after the expiration date of July 1, 2021 will be assessed a late fee. For more information on renewal, please review the following guidance documents:

- [2021 Terminal Renewal Information – EMS ONLY](#)
- [2021 Terminal Renewal Information](#)

OARRS Outage Root Cause Analysis Available

The Board of Pharmacy has posted a root cause analysis of the OARRS outage that occurred on April 24, 2021 conducted by our vendor, Appriss Health. A direct link to the RCA can be accessed here: www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/RCA424. As indicated in the analysis, our vendor is undertaking steps to prevent such an outage from occurring in the future.

2021 Rule Updates

The Board recently published a quarterly rule update for rules adopted through the first quarter of 2021. The update can be found [here](#).

COVID-19 Updates

For the latest information on Board of Pharmacy COVID-19 updates, visit: www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/COVID.
