

NCMS Opioid Task Force Meeting
February 16, 2021 12:00 – 1:00 pm
VIRTUAL - ZOOM

Members Present:

Ken Dunham (Chair)	Amanda Isac	Merritt Seshul
Greg Griggs	Robin Jordan	Dan McKearney
Franklin Walker	Thom Mansfield	Joseph Jordan
Janelle Rhyne	Allison Beam	Gandhari Loomis
Larry Greenblatt	Shauna Guthrie	William Johnstone

I Ken Dunham called the meeting to order and welcomed members, guests and staff. All meeting participants introduced themselves.

II Review of proposed bill 2021-MG-4A v2: Require Naloxone Scripts with Opioid Scripts

Comments: NC has standing order for pharmacists to dispense Naloxone – is this an extra, unnecessary step for a script requirement? Cost factor and patients more likely to get if free (not prescribed). Taking away clinical discretion? Reminder that this bill was sponsored by the company that makes Narcan nasal spray (possible conflict with intent). This further regulates the opioid/pain management space and so many primary care docs have fled this area – Medicaid data shows numbers of unique opioid prescribers has drastically decreased; this bill may cause even further withdrawal from this space by prescribers (further threats of administrative sanctions that are mentioned in the bill).

- OTF is **NOT** in favor of proposed bill 2021-MG-4A v2. Require Naloxone Scripts with Opioid Scripts.

III Review of proposed bill 2021-NC-26A v2. Allow pharmacists to administer injectable drugs.

Comments: As it is written this bill is encompassing ALL injectable drugs. NCAFP is opposed (there was a separate version that was particular to only Naltrexone and injectable Buprenorphine drugs). Bill language also does not specify IM or IV injection. Concerns regarding withdrawals or other symptoms that pharmacists are not equipped/capable to address (large concern with patient safety). No specification on who orders the drug. What is Board of Pharmacy's stance? (Joe Jordan offered to ask at his upcoming meeting with that Board.) Removes counseling aspect of treatment which is a concern as well. Would like to see more collaborative efforts addressed; as it stands currently this bill is too broad.

- OTF is **NOT** in favor of proposed bill 2021-NC-26A v2. Allow pharmacists to administer injectable drugs.

IV Review of House Bill 17, Pilot project to treat opioid overdoses

*Comments: Continuing funds for the New Hanover project – previous year data does show huge impact of the project, 80-90% engagement, New Hanover Co an epicenter for overdoses – targeted area; **Concerns were registered over: long-term funding, is the program truly evidence based, small geographical area.***

- OTF would like **more programmatic data** on the Quick Opioid Response Team Pilot Project associated with House Bill 17, Pilot project to treat opioid overdoses.

V Review of SAFE ACT

Comments: Concerns around legality, accountability, regulation; application of existing laws, concerns for deceptive marketing practices, unethical acts; non-involvement of the Medical Board regarding this act; overall a lot of confusion around the language and intention.

- OTF liked the idea of the SAFE ACT, however would like to see more specific language.

Meeting Adjourned.

Post Meeting Action Items:

1. Franklin will request data for HB17 project and send out via email.
2. Recommendations will be given to NCMS Advocacy staff.
3. Next Task Force meeting PRN; Annual LEAD Conference 10/14-15 (will be virtual)