



Arkansas Department of Health

Arkansas Board of Podiatric Medicine
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Act 651 of 2021 requires a healthcare professional, including a podiatric physician, to co-prescribe an opioid antagonist under certain conditions. A link to Act 651 is included here: <https://www.arkleg.state.ar.us/Acts/FTPDocument?path=%2FACTS%2F2021R%2FPublic%2F&file=651.pdf&ddBienniumSession=2021%2F2021R>

The Act requires the Arkansas State Medical Board and the Arkansas State Board of Pharmacy to jointly develop and publish guidance that addresses the circumstances in which a healthcare professional is required to prescribe or dispense, or both, an opioid antagonist to a patient when prescribing or dispensing an opioid. The Arkansas Board of Podiatric Medicine is required to issue guidance concerning the co-prescribing of an opioid antagonist that is no less restrictive than that adopted by the Arkansas State Medical Board and the Arkansas State Board of Pharmacy.

On December 29, 2021, the Arkansas Board of Podiatric Medicine adopted the following guidelines, which are identical to the guidelines adopted by the Arkansas State Medical Board and the Arkansas State Board of Pharmacy:

Guidelines for Co-Prescribing an Opioid Antagonist

1. Except as provided below, a healthcare professional shall co-prescribe an opioid antagonist to a patient who does not have an existing prescription for an opioid antagonist when prescribing or dispensing an opioid if:
 - i. The opioid dosage prescribed or dispensed is equal to or in excess of fifty morphine milligram equivalents (50 MME) per day for 5 days or longer;
 - ii. A benzodiazepine has been prescribed or dispensed for the patient in the past year or will be prescribed or dispensed at the same time as the opioid; or
 - iii. The patient has a history of opioid use disorder, substance use disorder or drug overdose.
2. If a healthcare professional does not believe that it is in the best interest of a patient to co-prescribe an opioid antagonist, the healthcare professional shall make documentation to that effect as provided in the guidance or rules of the appropriate licensing entity.
3. A healthcare professional who co-prescribes an opioid antagonist as required shall provide counseling and patient education to a patient, or a patient's parent or guardian if the patient is

less than eighteen (18) years of age, as provided in the guidance or rules of the appropriate licensing entity.

4. A healthcare professional who fails to co-prescribe an opioid antagonist as required under this guidance and Arkansas Statutes may be referred to the appropriate licensing board for administrative sanctions or disciplinary action.
5. This guidance does not apply to a patient receiving hospice or other end-of-life care.