



Our Risk Management Team is here to help you minimize and mitigate Medical Professional Liability risk.



Responsible Opioid Prescribing and Management During COVID-19

On June 2, 2020, the American Medical Association (AMA) issued a warning that the nation's opioid epidemic continues, and opioid-related mortality may be increasing due to the COVID-19 pandemic. See <https://www.ama-assn.org/system/files/2020-05/issue-brief-increases-in-opioid-related-overdose.pdf>. The stress of COVID-19 exposure, unemployment, and isolation, and the amount of uncertainty the pandemic has generated, are risk factors for opioid abuse. Epidemiologists are studying the specific effects of COVID-19 stay-at-home orders on access to pain medications, chronic pain management, opioid use disorder, relapses, and fatal and non-fatal overdoses. Physicians and other prescribers may see an increase in requests for opioids and for increasing doses of opioids. Two key steps to responsible opioid prescribing are checking the state database before prescribing and maintaining opioid prescribing competency, including related continuing medical education (CME).

1. Checking State Databases.

Responsible opioid prescribing and management includes utilizing the state's Controlled Substance Monitoring Program (CSMP), Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP), Prescription Monitoring Program (PMP), or Controlled Substance Database Program (CSD) before prescribing opioids and other controlled substances.

- Arizona physicians and other prescribers must register with and check the Arizona CSMP before prescribing opioids, unless the patient and prescription fall under an exception to the requirement. See <https://pharmacymp.az.gov/>.
- The Colorado Department of Regulatory Agencies Division of Professions and Occupations recommends physicians and other lawful prescribers perform an opioid risk assessment of the patient and check the PDMP before prescribing for the first time. The Division, however, does not require physicians and other lawful prescribers to check the PDMP for the initial prescription. After the first prescription, the Division requires all prescribers check the PDMP before prescribing additional opioids unless the patient and prescribing situation fall under an exception. See <https://dpo.colorado.gov/PDMP>.
- Nevada physicians must register to access the Nevada PMP and then complete and manually sign a Health Care Professional Certification Statement. Nevada physicians must also check the Nevada PMP before prescribing an opioid. See <https://bop.nv.gov/uploadedFiles/bopnvgov/content/Links/PMP%20Registration%20Instructions.pdf>.
- The Utah Department of Commerce Division of Occupational and Professional Licensing requires physicians and other prescribers register with the Utah CSD, complete online CSD training, and pass an online test of the CSD and appropriate opioid prescribing practices. Physicians and other licensed prescribers must check the CSD before prescribing a Schedule II or III opioid. See <https://dopl.utah.gov/csd/training.html>.

2. Earning Opioid CME

MICA's online opioid CME courses can be part of a physician's or other prescriber's responsible prescribing and management program. Arizona, Colorado, and Nevada physicians may also use the courses to fulfill state licensure requirements.

- Opioid Mortality: What Prescribers Can Do
- Psychotropic Medication Management in Primary Care
- Electronic Fetal Monitoring Case Study #19: Substance and Opioid Use Disorders in Pregnancy
- Controlled Substances Series: Fundamentals of Addiction and Addiction Treatment
- Controlled Substances Series: Best Practices for Prescribing
- Controlled Substances Series: Drug Diversion Prevention
- Prescribing Controlled Substances

Log into mica-insurance.com. On the Policyholder Home Page choose "Online CME Courses." Next, click on the MiCommunity catalog. On the MICA and Medical Interactive Community welcome page click on "Browse Catalog." Next, click on the plus-sign next to "Topics." Then, choose "Controlled Substances."

MICA's Senior Risk Management Consultants are available to help you with questions or concerns about opioid prescribing and management. You are welcome to call or email our Hotline at 800.352.0402 x2137, 602.808.2137, or rm_info@mica-insurance.com.

Customer Service 877.215.MICA (6422)

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