

Committee Working on Opioid Recommendations

New Michigan laws governing controlled substance prescriptions loom large as Munson Healthcare medical staff leadership looks to establish a uniform process throughout the system. These laws are bringing increased scrutiny of, and accountability to, the prescription of scheduled 2 - 5 drugs

Six of the new laws have requirements that go into effect between March 27 and July 1, 2018. The other law, which requires a bona fide prescriber-patient relationship, has seen the requirement date pushed back to the earlier of March 31, 2019 or when LARA finalizes rules on what constitutes a bona fide patient relationship. Munson Healthcare expects that the rules will be finalized prior to March 2019.

Munson Healthcare Population Health Medical Director James Whelan, MD, said the health system has a multidisciplinary committee actively working to help providers prepare for the changes.

“There is a Munson Healthcare system team who is going to create and distribute recommendations on processes and policies to meet these requirements,” he said. “This team will also standardize consent forms and patient education forms to help providers comply with the laws and provide consistent information to patients.”

The team plans to offer recommendations for providers that will promote safe prescription practices and reduce the likelihood of scrutiny on prescribing practices.

Michigan’s revamped MAPS system is already operational and tracking patient and provider information as it relates to controlled substance prescriptions and use. As shown in the accompanying box, providers will need to ensure patients are educated about opioids and sign a consent form (which will need to be included in patients’ medical records) before receiving their script.

Opioid Legislation Deadlines

2018

Effective March 27

- Licensed prescribers who treat a patient for an opioid overdose must provide the patient information on substance use disorder services.
- Licensed prescribers must report the dispensing of controlled substances to MAPS.

Effective June 1

- Licensed prescribers must be registered with MAPS before prescribing or dispensing a controlled substance to a patient.
- Licensed prescribers must obtain an informed consent from the patient or the patient’s parent/guardian using a Michigan Department of Health and Human Services form prior to a prescription of opioids. The only exception is inpatient use.
- Licensed prescribers will also be required to query the MAPS system before writing a prescription for a controlled substance for a patient.

Effective July 1

- Licensed prescribers treating a patient for acute pain may only prescribe a seven-day opioid supply.

2019

Effective March 31 (or earlier)

- Licensed prescribers need to show a bona fide patient-prescriber relationship.

Dr. Whelan said it will be important to head off unintended consequences of the new laws.

“While many of these are best practices, it does create a burden on prescribers and that added burden and scrutiny may result in some prescribers not prescribing these medications which could increase the burden on pain clinics and emergency resources,” he said.

More information on the new laws is available at the Michigan State Medical Society website, msms.org.

For opioid resources, including a toolkit, legislation FAQs, and how to register for MAPS, visit munsonhealthcare.org/opioid.

Please contact Dr. Whelan with any questions at jwhelan@mhc.net.

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Also, modern transportation means people and foodstuffs can travel hundreds of miles in a day. These factors also accelerate the spread of infectious agents and the vectors that transmit them.

“Because of these factors, the new normal in Michigan will likely include viral diseases that health care providers rarely had to consider when evaluating a patient with fevers, muscle and joint pains, or strange rashes,” said Mark Cannon, MD, PhD, Infectious Disease specialist at Munson Medical Center.

“As providers, it’s important that we learn to recognize illnesses that we may not have seen in training, and it’s equally important to educate our patients on best practices to avoid transmission of mosquito-borne

illnesses, such as using insect repellent, wear light-colored protective clothing, installing door and window screens, and avoiding tall grass.”

In addition to warmer average temperatures, the U.S. has also been experiencing an increase in severe weather events, such as hurricanes, floods, late spring freezes, and droughts.

“Flooded sewage systems and overcrowding due to home and infrastructure damage lead to emergence of food and water borne illnesses: Salmonella, Shigella, Campylobacter, Yersinia, Leptospirosis, and typhus to name a few,” explained Dr. Cannon. “These pathogens cause prolonged illness and even death in vulnerable populations like the very young, old, or immunocompromised. Severe weather events also put undue stress on those with chronic pulmonary, cardiac, or mental health issues.”