

RCW 18.22.800 Opioid drug prescribing rules—Adoption. (1) By January 1, 2019, the board must adopt rules establishing requirements for prescribing opioid drugs. The rules may contain exemptions based on education, training, amount of opioids prescribed, patient panel, and practice environment.

(2) In developing the rules, the board must consider the agency medical directors' group and centers for disease control guidelines, and may consult with the department of health, the University of Washington, and the largest professional association of podiatric physicians and surgeons in the state. [2017 c 297 § 2.]

Findings—Intent—2017 c 297: "The legislature finds that in 2015 an average of two Washington residents died per day in this state from opioid overdose and that opioid overdose deaths have more than doubled between 2010 and 2015.

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The legislature further finds that medically prescribed opioids intended to treat pain have contributed to the opioid epidemic and although Washington has done much to address the prescribing and tracking of opioid prescriptions, more needs to be done to ensure proper prescribing and use of opioids and access to treatment. This includes allowing local health officers to access the prescription monitoring program in order to provide patient follow-up and care coordination, including directing care to opioid treatment programs in the area as appropriate to the patient following an overdose event.

The legislature intends to streamline its already comprehensive system of tracking and treating opioid abuse by: Reducing barriers to the siting of opioid treatment programs; ensuring ease of access for prescribers, including those prescribers who provide services in opioid treatment programs, to the prescription monitoring program; allowing facilities and practitioners to use the information received under the prescription monitoring program for the purpose of providing individual prescriber quality improvement feedback; and requiring the boards and commissions of the health care professions with prescriptive authority to adopt rules establishing requirements for prescribing opioid drugs with the goal of reducing the number of people who inadvertently become addicted to opioids and, consequently, reducing the burden on opioid treatment programs." [2017 c 297 § 1.]