



For Immediate Release: April 18, 2017

Media Contact:

Vermont Department of Health
802-863-7281

Presentations for Health Care Providers to Cover New Opioid Prescribing Rules

BURLINGTON – The Vermont Department of Health is conducting a series of presentations for health care professionals about new rules governing opioid prescribing.

Presentations will be held April 18 in Burlington and April 20 in Rutland, and a webinar hosted by the Vermont Medical Society will take place on May 17. The sessions are designed to educate the state’s health care providers and prescribers about the requirements and public health policy for appropriate prescribing of opioids in treating acute pain. The new rules are scheduled to go into effect on July 1, 2017.

The revision to the existing prescribing rules are intended to minimize opportunities for misuse, abuse, diversion, addiction and overdoses, by flipping the presumption that a patient needs opioids to manage pain, and by addressing appropriate quantities for initial prescriptions.

“These rules are a critical part of our efforts to create conditions where we can prevent opioid addiction from starting,” said Health Commissioner Mark Levine, MD.

To bridge the varying prescribing practices and philosophies among Vermont’s prescribers, the rules set new ‘defaults’ for prescribing for pain, and requires that doctors assess non-opioid and non-pharmacological treatments before opioids are prescribed. Providers will also continue to engage patients in their own treatment decisions, through education concerning the risks associated with taking opioids, safe storage and appropriate disposal of opioids.

Dr. Levine said the new rules were approved by the Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules following an extensive process that included 19 meetings and a public hearing with patients, physicians, pharmacists, dentists, and other stakeholders.

For more information about the April 18 and 20 in-person presentations and the May 17 webinar, visit: <http://www.vtmd.org/sites/default/files/OpioidPrescribingflyer.pdf>

See the [Rule Governing the Prescribing of Opioids for Pain](#).

For health news, alerts and information, visit healthvermont.gov

Join us on [Facebook](#)

Follow us on [Twitter](#)

###