

MEDICAL BOARD STAFF REPORT

DATE REPORT ISSUED: October 7, 2013
 ATTENTION: Board Members
 SUBJECT: Prescribing Task Force
 STAFF CONTACT: Renee Threadgill

REQUESTED ACTION:

This report is intended to provide an update to the Members on the activities of the Prescribing Task Force. No action is needed at this time.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS:

The first meeting of the Task Force was held on September 23, 2013 in Sacramento. The meeting was attended by prescribers (physicians, osteopathic physicians, etc.) and dispensers (pharmacists), as well as representatives from the Attorney General's Office, Drug Enforcement Administration, consumer groups, US Department of Justice, California Medical Association, California Pharmacy Association, California Society of Health System Pharmacists, California Society of Addiction Medicine, California Society of Anesthesiology, California Pharmacy Lawyers, Department of Health Care Services, Costco, Purdue, Walgreens, California Retailers Association, Assembly Business and Professions Committee, Office of Senate Research, Department of Justice CURES Program, Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office, other regulatory boards (Board of Pharmacy, Board of Optometry, Registered Nursing Board, Physician Assistant Board, Osteopathic Medical Board, and Dental Board), and other interested parties. The meeting had approximately 80 participants, including staff.

The issues discussed at this meeting were specific to identifying appropriate patient information that can be shared/discussed between the prescriber and the pharmacist. Michael Bishop, M.D. and Barbara Yaroslavsky chaired the meeting, in coordination with Stan Weisser from the Board of Pharmacy. The meeting started with a PowerPoint presentation by Laura Sweet depicting how pain management has evolved over the last 50 years. Ms. Sweet also outlined the physician's responsibilities in prescribing by reviewing the Board's Pain Management Guidelines. The attendees also heard a presentation from Joshua Room, Deputy Attorney General, regarding a Board of Pharmacy precedential decision that was recently adopted. This precedential decision focused on a pharmacist's corresponding responsibility in assuring appropriate prescribing.

The attendees broke into groups and were tasked with identifying patient information that could be appropriately shared between the prescriber and the dispenser. In obtaining the prescribers and dispensers perspectives, some of the groups were asked to "exchange hats" and to provide their responses as if they were a member of the opposite profession. Although complete consensus was not obtained on all items, the group did agree on several items that should be shared, including diagnosis, information regarding the patient's treatment plan, validation of the information on the prescription, reasons for unusual prescribing, and the pain management contract.

The groups were also requested to identify problems and solutions for improvement in the communication between prescribers and dispensers. Several problems and solutions were identified, which can be categorized into three main topics:

- Education to the prescribers and dispensers regarding:
 - Prescribers' and dispensers' roles and responsibilities in order to obtain mutual respect of each other's roles
 - HIPAA
 - Red Flags

- Education to consumers
- An enhanced, fully functioning CURES system

Based upon the voluminous information obtained during this first meeting, the Prescribing Task Force will be meeting with the other regulatory Boards to develop a document that can provide guidance to the prescribers and dispensers regarding information that can be shared and other educational tips. Once this document is completed it can be placed into the Board's Newsletter and on the Board's Web site.

The next meeting of the Task Force will be focused on best practices for prescribing, including a review of the Board's Pain Management Guidelines. The Board has asked, and will continue to request, input from the experts in the field prior to the next meeting on what the top five issues that should be addressed in order to alleviate the overprescribing epidemic and solutions that may mitigate the overprescribing epidemic. Several meetings may be required in order to obtain information and identify potential edits to the Guidelines. The Task Force plans to convene another meeting between November and February to begin this process of identifying best practices.