State Overview Relating to Prescribing of Controlled Substances to Treat Pain and Clinical Drug Testing

Does North Carolina have a Prescription Drug Monitoring Program?

Yes. North Carolina has an electronic prescription drug-monitoring program known as the Controlled Substance Reporting System (NC-CSRS). An FAQ is available online and North Carolina encourages users to check the database before prescribing and dispensing.

Does North Carolina have a Pain Management Registration Requirement?

No. As of Q1-2014, North Carolina does not have a pain management clinic registration Act.

Does North Carolina have specific operational rules or a position statement for treating pain with controlled medications? Do these materials make reference to drug testing as part of a monitoring plan for patients using controlled medication?

Yes. North Carolina has a position statement on the Use of Controlled Substances for the Treatment of Pain. This statement, last updated in 2008, suggests that physicians use a written treatment agreement with patients, including a provision patient participation in urine or serum testing when requested. In mid-2013, the North Carolina Medical Board announced that it intended to revise and update this position statement and will likely do so in 2014.

Does North Carolina have guidance on Office Based Treatment of Opioid Addiction? Do these materials make reference to drug testing as part of the patient treatment plan?

No. North Carolina has not officially adopted a version of the Federation of State Medical Boards’ Model Policy for the Office Based Treatment of Opioid Addiction.

Quick Links & Resources

North Carolina Materials

State Prescription Monitoring Program and FAQ Document

Position Statement on Use of Controlled Substances to Treat Pain and Board Newsletter Announcing Update
http://www.ncmedboard.org/position_statements (scroll to Use of Controlled Substances to Treat Pain)
http://www.ncmedboard.org/newsletter/detail/forum-summer-2013

Link to North Carolina Medical Board

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO READERS

Quest Diagnostics does not intend for this document to impart any legal advice. The document is intended to be educational and readers are encouraged to review this information with qualified legal counsel before taking any action relative to controlled substance prescribing and clinical drug testing.

On the Horizon

North Carolina recently passed legislation requiring urine drug testing of applicants and employees of Long Term Care facilities.
Role of Clinical Drug Testing in the Management of Patients on Chronic Opioid Therapy

Brief Summary
North Carolina has one of the most robust Medical Board websites in the country. As it relates to pain management, addiction, and prescribing controlled medication, the North Carolina Medical Board (NCMB) has guidelines and rules that the physician must consider. North Carolina also has a prescription drug-monitoring program known as the NC Controlled Substances Reporting System (NC-CSRS).

North Carolina Prescription Drug Laws
Drug laws, rules, and regulations are constantly changing. Any attempt to summarize them would quickly become outdated. Because of that, the NCMB encourages practitioners who seek guidance on prescribing procedures to refer to the sources listed on its website under “laws” and Medical Practice Act.

NCMB Position Statements and References to Clinical Drug Testing
The NCMB has adopted several position statements published relating to the practice of medicine. These statements are posted http://www.ncmedboard.org/position_statements and include these topics, among others: writing prescriptions, referral fees and fee splitting, use of controlled substances for the treatment of pain, contact with patients before prescribing, and drug overdose prevention.

The NCMB’s position statement on the Use of Controlled Substances for the Treatment of Pain generally tracks the Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB) 2004 publication. Currently, the NCMB website references a 2008 date on its policy and notified licensees that it was in the process of revising and updating the same. http://www.ncmedboard.org/newsletter/detail/forum-summer-2013.

This policy contains the following reference to clinical drug testing: “If the patient is at high risk for medication abuse or has a history of substance abuse, the physician should consider the use of a written agreement between physician and patient outlining patient responsibilities, including urine/serum medication levels screening when requested...”

The entire policy is available at: http://www.ncmedboard.org/position_statements/detail/policy_for_the_use_of_controlled_substances_for_the_treatment_of_pain

Pain Management Registration and Rule
As of Q1-2014, North Carolina does not have a Pain Management Clinic Registration Rule.

Critical State Resources

North Carolina Medical Board
http://www.ncmedboard.org/

Controlled Substance Reporting System
http://www.ncdhhs.gov/MHDDSAS/controlledsubstance/

Pain Clinic Registration Materials:
NONE AS OF Q1-2014