SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY
Behavioral Health
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Substance Use Disorder Medication Safety and Effectiveness Policy

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Policy

It is the policy of the Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) to ensure all DBH and DBH contracted substance use disorder (SUD) treatment providers maintain safety and effective medication practices. Said practices are monitored on annual basis by medical professionals or addiction treatment specialists, under the supervision of a professional licensed and permitted to prescribe and dispense prescription drugs.

Purpose

To provide operational guidance for annual monitoring activities by medical professionals or addiction treatment specialists (under the supervision of a licensed professional able to prescribe and dispense) to evaluate the safety and effectiveness of SUD medication services provided by DBH and DBH contracted SUD treatment providers.

Medication Safety

Safety of medications is ensured by following existing DBH policy and procedures, which describe parameters and strict requirements to ensure medications, prescription forms, syringes, and other medical supplies are properly ordered, recorded/logged, stored, disposed of (when expired/abandoned/deteriorated), and are safely kept from persons who are not duly authorized to access, administer, or handle medications or medical supplies. All medical staff authorized to prescribe, administer, and/or dispense medications will be required to complete specified medication safety trainings at least annually.

Medication Effectiveness

Efforts to enhance medication effectiveness will include e the following:

- Obtaining complete client data prior to medication being prescribed, dispensed, or administered, including laboratory data, medical records or other pertinent information;
- Documenting all prescriptions, supplements, and over-the-counter medications, and any known allergies to minimize preventable adverse drug reactions;
- Providing information and education to client about their medication;
- Soliciting client feedback regarding medication use and effectiveness, and
- Soliciting client responses to determine:
  - Negative reactions or side effects, and/or
  - Relief of originally-identified symptoms being treated.

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Monitoring Activities

To assure safety and effectiveness of Medi-Cal services DBH reviews and monitors medication practices, including monitoring for adverse side effects, allergies, quality of care provided and documentation of informed consent. The table below identifies the different monitoring activities, the staff responsible for conducting them, and the monitoring/reporting frequency:

Monitoring Activity	Responsible Staff	Required Frequency
Conduct internal Quality Assurance Reviews (QARs) to ensure charts are being maintained to Drug Medi-Cal standards and all other applicable regulations	Clinic level multidisciplinary non-medical staff including clerical staff, case managers, certified SUD counselors, clinicians, and clinic supervisors	Monthly
Conduct chart and site reviews of all DBH and DBH contracted SUD clinics to ensure charts are being maintained to Drug Medi-Cal standards and all other applicable regulations	Substance Use Disorder and Recovery Services (SUDRS) Administration Unit program coordinators	At least annually
Conduct physician peer analysis consisting of reviewing documentation and treatment of consumers by their peers and providing specific feedback. Positive feedback is included in these reviews to encourage the continuation of current best practices	All SUD Physicians are required to participate in these reviews	A minimum of three (3) charts will be reviewed at least quarterly

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Monitoring Activities, continued

Monitoring Activity	Responsible Staff	Required Frequency
Discuss significant medical practice issues that were identified during the aforementioned monitoring activities and other departmental processes and referred to the Medical Monitoring Committee	Supervising SUD physicians	Meets on a quarterly basis
DBH contractors' charts will be reviewed for documentation of home medications, medication allergies, possible drug interactions, and appropriate indications/contraindications for medications prescribed	SUDRS Administration program coordinators	Periodically
Reviews of DBH contracted Narcotic Treatment Providers	SUDRS Administration program coordinators	At least annually, and in in the event of incidents involving medical safety.
Reviews of DBH contracted residential SUD providers	SUDRS Administration program coordinators	At least annually, and in in the event of incidents involving medical safety.

Reporting of Findings

Findings following the reviews mentioned herein will be formally reported and discussed during quarterly Quality Management Action Committee meetings to determine effective methods for minimizing and/or eliminating recurrences. Findings of an urgent nature will be reported immediately to the Director, Medical Director, Physician of Addiction Medicine, and Deputy Director over Quality Management to ensure appropriate and immediate corrective action.

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Related Policy or Procedure	DBH Standard Practice Manual: • Control, Access and Accountability of Medications and Medical Supplies Policy (MDS2008) • Control, Access and Accountability of Medications and Medical Supplies Procedure (MDS2008-1) • Handling of Contaminated Waste/Needles and Syringes (MDS2014) • Medication Disposal Procedure (MDS2023)
Reference(s)	• California Health and Safety Code, Sections 117600 - 118360 , Medical Waste Management Act • Internal DBH Forms and Manuals: DBH Medical Waste Management (MWM) Program (SFT054)