
The National Society of Dental Practitioners and the Dentist's Advantage Insurance Program for Dentists

RISK MANAGEMENT ALERT

NEW ADA POLICY TO COMBAT OPIOID EPIDEMIC

On March 26, 2018 the American Dental Association (ADA) announced a [new policy](#) to combat the opioid epidemic. The new policy statement urges all dentists to increase their efforts to prevent opioids from harming patients by following all suggested guidelines.

The policy supports mandatory continuing education in prescribing opioids and all controlled substances. The policy also supports statutory limits on the dosage and duration of treatment of acute pain consistent with CDC evidence-based guidelines. The policy urges dentists to register and use PDMPs (Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs) to deter the misuse and abuse of these medications.

In 2016 the ADA issued a policy for all dentists to “consider nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory analgesics as the first-line therapy for acute pain management”.

Remember that these policy statements can be used as evidence in any malpractice or regulatory complaint case involving the alleged miss-use or errors in prescribing opioids or any controlled substance. If you prescribe any controlled substance, including opioids, pay close attention to the many current articles and announcements concerning this issue.

For more information on how the ADA is working to combat opioid abuse, visit www.ADA.org/opioids.