



# Alaska Pharmacists Association

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February 13, 2019 (Last updated March 12, 2019)

Dear AKPhA Members:

On behalf of the Alaska Pharmacists Association Board of Directors, I would like to respond to member concerns regarding the recent letter about the dispensing of controlled substances issued by the Alaska Board of Pharmacy to all pharmacists practicing in the State of Alaska.

We were fortunate to have the Alaska Board of Pharmacy Chair and Vice Chair Richard Holt and Leif Holm already scheduled to present a continuing education update at our 53<sup>rd</sup> Annual AKPhA Convention on February 10<sup>th</sup> where we had many of our questions addressed. The Board of Pharmacy also drafted a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) sheet for pharmacists regarding opioid prescriptions which is attached and also now posted on their website. For a full copy of their letter, the corresponding press releases issued by the State, or to be added to their next meeting agenda, please visit:

<https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/cbpl/professionallicensing/boardofpharmacy.aspx>.

I was recently able to attend a portion of the Board of Pharmacy meeting March 7, 2019, including the public comment portion, which was held remotely in Juneau during our Annual Legislative Fly-In. This is a useful avenue to voice concerns/comments, some of which were addressed directly.

While the Board of Pharmacy is the only entity that has the exact information regarding the details of the events leading up the issuance of that letter, I have the utmost respect and trust in the pharmacists around the State of Alaska and your ability to continue to provide the best care to the patients here. I'm highly honored to serve in this position, as President of AKPhA, and use this opportunity to acknowledge the continued hard work and determination around the State of Alaska to fulfill your oath taken as a pharmacist and apply knowledge, experience and skills to the best of your abilities to assure optimal outcomes for our patients. Continue practicing at the top of your license and advocating for issues that you feel passionate about. Continue to screen opiate prescriptions as you are trained and guided to do. Continue to use good judgment and document when you do make decisions (i.e. refusal to fill) regarding opioid prescriptions.

We are still battling an opioid epidemic in Alaska and around the nation and we all have the same goals of providing optimal patient care. Controlling the opioid epidemic will require a wide range of strategies employed over a prolonged period of time as well as collaboration with many sectors and disciplines, according to Alaska's 2018-2022 Statewide Opioid Action Plan. Collaboration between the prescriber, pharmacist and patient is key to providing the best care to our patients.

E-mail: [akphrncy@alaska.net](mailto:akphrncy@alaska.net)

203 W. 15<sup>th</sup> Ave., Suite 100 • Anchorage, Alaska 99501 • (907) 563-8880 • (907) 563-7880

Thank you for your continued support and membership with the Alaska Pharmacists Association. AKPhA advocates for all pharmacists and technicians in the State of Alaska, and actively seeks input and involvement from all members. Please direct further inquiries to the association and our Board of Directors at [www.alaskapharmacy.org](http://www.alaskapharmacy.org) .

Sincerely and Respectfully,

Adele Davis, PharmD, BCACP  
President, Alaska Pharmacists Association