

NEBRASKA

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DEPT. OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES



Pete Ricketts, Governor

January 25, 2018

Senator Laura Ebke
District #32 State Capitol
P.O. Box 94604
Lincoln, NE 68509-4604

RE: LB 931

The Department would like to express its support for LB 931. I would ask that my letter be formally included in the record in support of LB 931.

LB 931 proposes an opiate prescribing limit of a 7-day supply which would apply to only patients younger than 19 years old when needed for outpatient use. Additionally, this bill proposes required risk education to parents for initial opiate prescriptions, allows for medically appropriate exceptions, and requires specific considerations for the exceptions to be documented in the medical record. There is an exclusion of this opiate prescribing limit when the patient is being treated for substance misuse.

In October 2017, the Division of Public Health released the Nebraska Pain Management Guidance Document. This guidance document was developed utilizing evidence-based pain management information and the guidance of Nebraska providers from a variety of specialties. This guidance document notes that in many cases opioids have not been labeled to treat pain of individuals under 18 years old. Additionally, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Opioid Prescribing Guidelines and Nebraska Pain Management Guidance Document encourage open discussions about the risks and benefits of opioid therapy not only upon initial visit or prescription but periodically throughout treatment for pain.

Additionally, the Division of Public Health in collaboration with the Nebraska Health Information Initiative have implemented enhancements to the Nebraska Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP). The PDMP is an effective tool that is used by medical providers to make a more informed treatment decision with their patient. The PDMP patient medication history is also directly linked to the Nebraska Pain Management Guidance Document in those instances when a patient medication history has indicated a high daily dosage of opioids.

We would like to point out that LB 931 places these opiate prescribing requirements in the Uniform Controlled Substances Act which would make violations of these requirements criminal offenses. We strongly recommend that the bill be made clear that these requirements are to be placed in the Uniform Credentialing Act. This would allow the professional licensure boards to impose sanctions if any disciplinary action is needed.

We believe LB 931 will help DHHS continue our mission of helping people live better lives. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Thomas L. Williams, MD
Chief Medical Officer
Director, Division of Public Health
Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services

cc: Senator Sarah Howard