
**SASKATCHEWAN REGISTERED NURSES' ASSOCIATION
COUNCIL POLICY**

POLICY NAME: RN(NP) Prescribing Drug Therapeutics **NUMBER:** 3.19
for Opioid Use Disorder (OUD)

POLICY TYPE: Governance Process

DATE OF ORIGIN: March 2019

REVIEW DATE: March 2021

RESPONSIBLE: Registration

APPROVED _____

Pursuant to *The Registered Nurses Act, 1988*, Section 7 and Section 15(2)(d) and Section 15(2)(f.1) and *SRNA Bylaws, 2018*, Bylaw I, Section 3(a) and Bylaw VI - Categories of Practice, Section 3(3)(c)(i1) and Bylaw VI – Categories of Practice, Section 4, the regulatory processes required for the RN(NP) to prescribe drug therapeutics for Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) is further defined in this policy.

1. This Council Policy sets the requirements for RN(NP)s to prescribe for OUD.
 - 1.1 In accordance with the SRNA mandate to set standards for competence and to govern prescribing, the RN(NP) must meet all the following requirements prior to receiving authority to prescribe drug therapeutics for OUD:
 - 1.1.1 Practice Requirements
 - 1.1.2 Practice Assessment Application
 - 1.1.3 Education Requirement
 - 1.1.4 Practicum Requirement
 - 1.1.5 Continuing Education/Competency Requirements
 - 1.1.6 Audit Requirements
 - 1.1.7 Monitoring Requirements
2. No RN(NP) shall prescribe drug therapeutics for the treatment of OUD unless the Registrar has granted approval for the RN(NP) to do so.
3. The Registrar may grant temporary approval to an RN(NP) who does not meet the requirements of this council policy to prescribe drug therapeutics for the treatment of OUD if the Registrar concludes that it is appropriate to grant that approval to ensure continuity of care to clients. The Registrar will, in granting that approval state the period for which that approval is in effect and any conditions and/or restrictions on that approval.

4. Practice Requirements

4.1 The RN(NP) must practice within the legislated scope of practice including the following:

- 4.1.1 Current *Registered Nurse (Nurse Practitioner) Practice Standards*;
- 4.1.2 Current *Registered Nurse (Nurse Practitioner) Controlled Drugs and Substances Prescribing Guidelines*;
- 4.1.3 Current Code of Ethics; and
- 4.1.4 SRNA policies.

4.2 The RN(NP) must be a member in good standing to receive approval to prescribe drug therapeutics for OUD.

4.3 The RN(NP) provides treatment options for OUD that are consistent with current evidence-informed practices and clinical practice guidelines.

4.4 The RN(NP) regularly sees clients with OUD requiring treatment with drug therapeutics within their own practice and adheres to the principles of current SRNA Council Policy 3.21 *Common Medical Disorders*.

4.5 The RN(NP) ensures that the practice environment supports their practice to prescribe drug therapeutics for OUD. The following must be in place in the practice setting prior to the RN(NP) prescribing:

- 4.5.1 Employer support for RN(NP) prescribing;
- 4.5.2 Access to an OUD drug therapeutics initiating provider who meets all federal and provincial requirements;
- 4.5.3 Access to a multidisciplinary team including but not limited to counselling services, laboratory and pharmacy services, or other health care professionals to provide clients with a full range of treatment options; and
- 4.5.4 Access to after-hours care and continuity of care through a multidisciplinary team.

4.6 The RN(NP) will begin prescribing drug therapeutics for OUD as a maintenance prescriber where the clients have been stabilized on drug therapeutics by an OUD drug therapeutics initiating provider who meets all federal and provincial requirements.

4.7 To advance from maintenance prescriber to initiating prescriber, the RN(NP) must demonstrate the following:

- 4.7.1 Competence to evaluate the suitability of therapeutic management;
- 4.7.2 Practice within a multidisciplinary team;
- 4.7.3 Regularly assess and treat clients with OUD; and
- 4.7.4 Mentorship and support from an established initiating prescriber.

4.8 The RN(NP) will adhere to SRNA Bylaw VI, Section 4 – Prescription Review Program and will utilize the Pharmaceutical Information Program (PIP) when prescribing drug therapy for OUD.

4.9 The RN(NP) shall not prescribe drug therapeutics for OUD in any practice setting without completing the requirements set out in this policy for RN(NP) prescribing drug therapeutics for OUD, except as provided below:

4.9.1 In a hospital setting, where the RN(NP) does not regularly prescribe drug therapeutics for OUD and in which the client requires their continuation dose of drug therapeutics, the RN(NP) may prescribe a short-term continuation dosage of drug therapeutics while the client is under their professional treatment in a hospital setting.

4.9.2. In this situation, the RN(NP) may not have the specialized knowledge of OUD but is responsible for the client to receive continuation of drug therapeutics for OUD.

4.9.3 The RN(NP) must inform the primary prescriber of the hospitalization and anticipated discharge date.

4.10 When the RN(NP) changes practice settings, the RN(NP) must notify the Registrar.

4.11 Once all requirements are met by the RN(NP), the approval to prescribe drug therapeutics for OUD will be indicated on the Register.

4.12 The RN(NP) must complete a practice assessment at the following times:

4.12.1 When the RN(NP) has a change in practice setting; and/or

4.12.2 When the RN(NP) advances to initiating prescriber drug therapeutics for OUD.

5. RN(NP) Maintenance Prescriber Application

5.1 The initial application requirement for the RN(NP) to apply for approval to prescribe drug therapeutics for OUD includes:

5.1.1 *RN(NP) Maintenance Prescriber Application - Drug Therapeutics for Opioid Use Disorder (OUD)*

5.1.2 *RN(NP) Practice Assessment - Maintenance Prescriber for Opioid Use Disorder (OUD)*

5.1.3 *RN(NP) Undertaking - Prescribing Drug Therapeutics for OUD*

6. Education Requirements

6.1 In order to receive approval to prescribe drug therapeutics for OUD, the RN(NP) must meet the education requirement recognized by Council.

6.2 Council has recognized completion of one of the following courses, which may change from time to time, as the initial education requirement for RN(NP)s to prescribe drug therapeutics for OUD:

6.2.1 [Opioid Agonist Therapy Conference](#) by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Saskatchewan

6.2.2 [Provincial Opioid Addiction Treatment Support Program](#) from the British Columbia Centre on Substance Use (BCCSU).

6.2.3 [Addiction Care and Treatment Online Course](#) from the University of British Columbia.

6.2.4 [Alberta Opioid Dependency Treatment Virtual Training Course](#) from the University of Calgary.

6.3 New courses may be approved by Council and council policy will be updated accordingly.

6.4 The RN(NP) must submit confirmation of completion of the required education to the SRNA.

7. Practicum Requirement

7.1 In addition to completing one of the theoretical courses, the RN(NP) must complete at least 16 hours of clinical practicum with an OUD drug therapeutics initiating provider who meets all federal and provincial requirements to allow that provider to prescribe drug therapeutics for the purpose of treating OUD.

7.2 The RN(NP) must submit confirmation documents of having completed the practicum to the SRNA.

8. Continuing Education/Competency Requirements

8.1 The RN(NP) must regularly participate in continuing education focused on addiction and OUD as part of their Continuing Competence Program requirements.

8.2 The RN(NP) must retain documentation of continuing education focused on addiction and OUD.

8.3 The practice assessment is designed according to the RN(NP) Standards.

8.4 The RN(NP) must submit continuing education confirmation documents to the SRNA as part of the audit requirements.

9. Audit Requirements

9.1 For the purpose of this Council Policy, an undertaking is defined as a formal agreement between the SRNA and the RN(NP). The undertaking states that the RN(NP) shall comply with the audit requirements as determined by the Registrar.

9.2 The RN(NP) must sign an undertaking in which the RN(NP) agrees to the following:

9.2.1 To practice in accordance with the current SRNA Bylaws, Standards, Council Policies and guidelines, and

9.2.2 To comply with audit requirements, as determined by the Registrar.

9.3 The audit requirements include a practice audit and may include an on-site audit or a chart audit, as determined by the Registrar.

9.4 The practice audit is a professional improvement tool that supports safe prescribing of drug therapeutics for OUD.

9.5 Audit requirements for OUD is a supplementary process that is distinct from the audit process of the Continuing Competence Program.

9.6 Annually, a random number of RN(NP)s will be selected from all RN(NP)s prescribing drug therapeutics for OUD. Therefore, an RN(NP) prescriber should always be prepared to be selected for the annual audit.

9.7 RN(NP) participation in the annual audit will be documented.

9.8 When concerns are identified in the practice audit, the Registrar or designate may follow up with the RN(NP) in accordance with SRNA Bylaw VI, Section 4.

9.9 When an on-site audit and/or chart audit is required, the Registrar will notify the RN(NP) in writing.

10. Monitoring Requirements

10.1 In accordance with current SRNA Bylaws, Bylaw VI – Categories of Practice, Section 4, the prescribing profiles of the RN(NP) prescribing drug therapeutics for OUD will be monitored by the SRNA Registrar or designate.

10.2. The RN(NP) must submit documentation as requested by the Registrar.

11. Process to Suspend Approval to Prescribe for OUD

11.1 The Registrar may suspend the approval granted to an RN(NP) to prescribe drug therapeutics for the treatment of OUD if the Registrar concludes that the RN(NP) has failed to comply with the terms of the applicable bylaws, standards and council policies. Pursuant to *The Registered Nurses Act, 1988*, Section 26, a complaint shall be submitted to the Investigation Committee for further review.

11.2 A decision made by the Registrar is subject to appeal to Council under Section 21(3)(b) of *The Registered Nurses Act, 1988*.

11.3 At any time, the RN(NP) may surrender approval to prescribe drug therapeutics for OUD. The RN(NP) must complete the required surrender form and submit it to the Registrar.

References

Canadian Research Initiative in Substance Misuse (CRISM). (2018). *CRISM national guideline for the clinical management of opioid use disorder*. Retrieved from <https://crism.ca/projects/opioid-guideline/>

College of Physicians and Surgeons of Saskatchewan (CPSS). (2018). *Opioid agonist therapy program. Standards and guidelines for the treatment of opioid use disorder*. Retrieved from <https://www.cps.sk.ca/iMIS/Documents/Legislation/Policies/OAT%20Standards%20and%20Guidelines.pdf>