

PRACTICE STANDARD

Nurse Practitioners: Prescribing for Opioid Use Disorder and/or Prescribed Alternatives

Introduction

The standards, limits and conditions in this document set out the requirements for prescribing¹:

- Opioid agonist treatment for opioid use disorder; and/or
- Regulated, pharmaceutical-grade medications of known quality and dosage to people at high risk of harm from the unregulated drug supply (**prescribed alternatives**).

These standards, limits and conditions do not apply to prescribing opioid agonists for pain and other symptoms.

Standards

1. Nurse practitioners prescribing opioid agonist treatment and/or prescribed alternatives meet the requirements in the *Nurse Practitioners: Prescribing Drugs* practice standard.
2. Nurse practitioners prescribing opioid agonist treatment and/or prescribed alternatives apply knowledge about:
 - a. Substance use disorders including opioid use disorder,
 - b. Treatment strategies for opioid use disorder (e.g. opioid agonist treatment, psychosocial treatment interventions), and
 - c. Harm reduction strategies for substance use and opioid use disorder.
3. Nurse practitioners prescribe opioid agonist treatment and/or prescribed alternatives in a manner that promotes client and public safety.

Limits & conditions

1. Nurse practitioners who prescribe opioid agonist treatment for opioid use disorder and/or prescribed alternatives must:
 - a. Meet the education requirements of the [British Columbia Centre on Substance Use](#); and
 - b. Complete a preceptorship that meets the requirements of the British Columbia Centre on Substance Use.

¹ Includes initiating, continuing, or discontinuing the prescribing of a drug.

2. Nurse practitioners who prescribe opioid agonist treatment for opioid use disorder must apply the clinical practice guidelines for the treatment of opioid use disorder established by the British Columbia Centre on Substance Use.
3. Nurse practitioners who prescribe prescribed alternatives must:
 - a. Follow clinical protocols as per the Ministry of Health [Access to Prescribed Alternatives in British Columbia](#) policy or the guidance of the British Columbia Centre on Substance Use; and
 - b. Participate in evaluation and monitoring of prescribed alternatives for safer supply as per the Ministry of Health [Access to Prescribed Alternatives in British Columbia](#) policy.

Glossary

Client: individual receiving nursing care or services from a nurse.

Prescribed alternatives: regulated, pharmaceutical-grade medications of known quality and dosage prescribed to people at high risk of harm from the unregulated drug supply.

Revision history

Version #	Approved by board	Bylaw in-force	Description
1.0	March 1, 2026	April 1, 2026	Initial publication

Effective April 1, 2026, this practice standard, and any amendments to it, is made a bylaw under the authority of the *Health Professions and Occupations Act, B.C.*

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