

**WAC 246-817-916 Treatment plan—Subacute pain.** (1) The dentist shall recognize the progression of a patient from the acute nonoperative or acute perioperative phase to the subacute phase and take into consideration the risks and benefits of continued opioid prescribing for the patient.

(2) If tapering has not begun prior to the six- to twelve-week subacute phase, the dentist shall reevaluate the patient who does not follow the expected course of recovery. If significant and documented improvement in function or pain control has not occurred, the dentist shall reconsider the continued use of opioids or whether tapering or discontinuing opioids is clinically indicated. The dentist shall make reasonable attempts to discontinue the use of opioids prescribed for the acute pain event by no later than the twelve-week conclusion of the subacute phase.

(3) If the dentist prescribes opioids for effective pain control, such prescriptions must not be in a greater quantity than needed for the expected duration of pain severe enough to require opioids. The dentist shall not prescribe beyond a fourteen-day supply of opioids without clinical documentation to justify the need for such a quantity during the subacute phase.

(4) If the dentist elects to prescribe a combination of opioids with a medication listed in WAC 246-817-975 or prescribes opioids to a patient known to be receiving a medication listed in WAC 246-817-975 from another practitioner, the dentist shall prescribe in accordance with WAC 246-817-975.

(5) If the dentist elects to treat a patient with opioids beyond the six- to twelve-week subacute phase, the dentist shall document in the patient record that the patient is transitioning from subacute pain to chronic pain. Rules governing the treatment of chronic pain in WAC 246-817-919 through 246-817-967, shall apply.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 18.32.002, 18.32.0365, 18.32.800 and 2017 c 297. WSR 19-02-043, § 246-817-916, filed 12/26/18, effective 1/26/19.]