



Patient Education Guidelines for Opioid Medications

Neighborhood Health Center uses evidence-based practices and follows community standards in the treatment of chronic pain. This includes but is not limited to:

- 1) **No opioid medication will be prescribed on the first visit.** This includes Tramadol which NHC treats as an opioid medication.
- 2) All records from previous prescribers must be reviewed before opioid medications will be considered. This may take at least 30 days.
- 3) There are many reasons opioid medications are not prescribed. Including but not limited to:
 - a) Current use of marijuana
 - b) If in the past opioid medications were stopped or not used due to treatment concerns
 - c) Violation of a medication agreement in the past
 - d) Participation in a methadone treatment program
 - e) Current use of other medications such as benzodiazepines (Valium, Xanax, Klonopin, etc.) or Ambien.
- 4) You may be asked to give a Urine Drug Screen (UDS) at any time. Failure to do a UDS when asked will result in opioid medications not being prescribed. If you decline UDS non-opioid methods can still be used to help manage pain.
- 5) All patients on chronic opioid medications will have to sign an opioid agreement and follow that agreement. Including but not limited:
 - a) Bringing your pain medications to each visit with your PCP (even empty pill bottles)
 - b) Face to face visits are required for all refills of opioid medications. Refills are not done over the phone or on a same day appointment.
- 6) The decision to use controlled medications is based on a variety of factors. Most chronic pain is treated without the use of opioid medications. Chronic opiate medication is NOT indicated for Fibromyalgia, Headaches, and Chronic back pain.
- 7) The decision whether or not to treat with opioid medication is one your provider will make after careful and thoughtful review of your records and current health concerns. This decision is based on NHC guidelines which were developed in line with current evidenced based practice and community standards of care.
- 8) There are a wide variety of ways to treat and manage chronic pain. Your provider will work with you to develop a plan to treat your chronic pain. This may include: exercise, physical therapy, mental health treatment, and weight loss.
- 9) Patients are expected to be active participants in their health and management of their pain.