



State of Vermont
Office of the Secretary of State

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Notice of Required Continuing Education Regarding Controlled Substances

To: OPR licensed professionals who prescribe or dispense controlled substances, to include; *Osteopathic Physicians, Dentists, Pharmacists, Advanced Practice Registered Nurses, Optometrists, and Naturopathic Physicians*

From: Vermont Office of Professional Regulation (OPR)

Date: March 22, 2018, with April 6, 2018 clarification memo attached

Re: Continuing Education Requirement for License Renewal

Effective with the passage in 2016 of Vermont Act 173, all Office of Professional Regulation dispensing and prescribing professions, (as listed above), with a registration number from the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), who have a pending application for a DEA number, or who dispense controlled substances, **shall complete at least two hours of continuing education for each full licensing period beginning on or after June 8, 2016** on the topics of:

- the abuse and diversion, safe use, and appropriate storage and disposal of controlled substances;
- the appropriate use of the Vermont Prescription Monitoring System;
- risk assessment for abuse or addiction;
- pharmacological and nonpharmacological alternatives to opioids for managing pain;
- medication tapering and cessation of the use of controlled substances; and,
- relevant State and federal laws and regulations concerning the prescription of opioid controlled substance.

Documentation of these completed continuing education hours must be uploaded to the online licensing platform during your renewal. This is required with your first full renewal period beginning after the June 8, 2016, effective date of Act 173. Please refer to your current license expiration date(s) to plan for this requirement.

For further information on this requirement, refer to Vermont 2016 ACT 173 (S.243), An act relating to combating opioid abuse in Vermont, Section 9 Continuing Education.

April 6, 2018 Clarification Memo

To Vermont licensee:

This memo clarifies the “Notice of Required Continuing Education Regarding Controlled Substances” per Vermont 2016 ACT 173 (S.243), sent to you on March 22, 2018. This applies to professionals licensed by the Office of Professional Regulation (OPR) in dispensing and prescribing professions if you,

- a) have a registration number from the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA),
- b) have a pending application for a DEA number, or
- c) dispense controlled substances.

This confirms that the Continuing Education (CE) requirement is for **a total of 2 credits** for the biennial renewal period, (the requirement is not for a total of 12 credits, 2 from each area). These 2 credits are part of, (not in addition to), the overall CE requirements for your profession. They may be taken online or in person.

This CE requirement must be taken from the six topic areas listed in Act 173:

- the abuse and diversion, safe use, and appropriate storage and disposal of controlled substances;
- the appropriate use of the Vermont Prescription Monitoring System;
- risk assessment for abuse or addiction;
- pharmacological and nonpharmacological alternatives to opioids for managing pain;
- medication tapering and cessation of the use of controlled substances; and,
- relevant State and federal laws and regulations concerning the prescription of opioid controlled substance.

Your certificate of completion should be submitted at the time of your renewal, in the same manner as any other renewal requirement, uploaded to the online licensing platform. Expiration/renewal dates are as follows:

- Osteopath license, **September 30, 2018**
- Dental license, **September 30, 2019**
- Pharmacy license, of **July 31, 2019**
- Advanced Practice Registered Nurse license, **March 31, 2019**
- Optometry license, of **July 31, 2018**
- Naturopath license, **September 30, 2018**

While OPR does not endorse specific Continuing Education course providers for this requirement, nor in most cases “pre-approve” a specific course, you may find these resources helpful:

- **Your professional organization** may provide resource for continuing education courses.
- The Vermont Department of Health, **Alcohol and Drug Abuse Programs (ADAP)**, may provide resource for continuing education courses: <http://www.healthvermont.gov/alcohol-drugs/professionals>
- Several **national organizations** may provide resource for continuing education courses:
 - Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)
 - National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)
 - National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAA)

- The **Vermont Medical Society (VMS)** provides a list of several courses: <http://www.vtmd.org/cme-courses>
- The **Vermont Board of Medical Practice** may provide resources for continuing education courses: <http://www.healthvermont.gov/systems/medical-practice-board>
- You may **defer to the rules that guide the Vermont Board of Pharmacy** requirements for continuing education in that profession: ***All ACPE and AMA Category I approved programs and programs approved by pharmacy boards in other states*** that meet the Act 173 topic areas will be accepted for the Controlled Substances CE requirement for your profession licensed by OPR.