

Vijapura Behavioral Health Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Controlled Substances

Purpose:

To establish our internal process for the prescribing of controlled substances in accordance with federal, state, and administrative laws and regulations in order to maximize efficacy and safety, while minimizing risks of harm and abuse.

Definitions:

Controlled substance: a drug or chemical whose manufacture, possession or use is regulated by a government, such as illicitly used drugs or prescription medications that are designated a control drug. The current official schedule of controlled substances can be found at: <https://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/schedules/>. An updated and complete list of their schedules is published annually in Title 21 Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R.) 1308.11 through 1308.15, and Section 893.03, Florida Statutes.

Provider: Physician (MD/DO), Physician Assistant (PA), or Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner

EPCS: Electronic prescribing for controlled substances. EPCS is required for providers in Florida.

Telemedicine: The use of synchronous telecommunications technology by a provider to provide health care services, including, but not limited to the assessment, diagnosis, consultation treatment, and monitoring, per section 456.47, Florida Statutes.

Commonly used controlled substances in psychiatric practice include but are not limited to: psychostimulants (C II), buprenorphine (C III), benzodiazepines receptor agonists (C IV), and benzodiazepines (C IV).

Detailed Operating Procedure:

General:

- All providers must maintain active board certification, active DEA and XDEA licenses, liability insurance, and valid Florida License. A Controlled Substance Prescribing CME course is required as per Florida License requirements for all providers.
- All Physician Assistants will receive adequate supervision from Dr. Vijapura. Dr. Vijapura has notified the Florida Board of Medicine of his intent to delegate full prescribing authority to licensed Physician Assistants at Vijapura Behavioral Health.
- All Psychiatric Nurse Practitioners will receive adequate supervision from Dr. Vijapura.

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For Initial Prescription of a Controlled Substance

- All patients who are prescribed a controlled substance must have an in-person visit with Dr. Sagar Vijapura prior to issuance of initial prescription.
- Commonly used screening questionnaires are **NOT** sufficient for diagnosis. Insights through gained through such forms may suggest the need for a more in-depth clinician interview.
- Medical necessity as well as the risks and benefits for the prescriptions for controlled medications must be comprehensively discussed with the patient and this discussion must be documented in the medical record.
- Consultation with cardiology should be obtained for patients with a history of cardiac disease for whom a psychostimulant medication is medically indicated.

For Continuation of a Controlled Substance:

- All patients who are prescribed controlled substances must have a follow-up visit **AT LEAST** every 90 days.
- At each follow-up visit, the provider will assess efficacy and tolerability for all patients prescribed controlled substances. The lowest effective dose and quantity are to be prescribed. Ongoing medical need for controlled substance prescriptions will be continually assessed and documented in the medical record.
- Any changes to the dose or frequency of a controlled substance or switching to a different controlled substance, of a during follow-up visits with a Physician Assistant will be reviewed with Dr. Vijapura.
- Case Review may be initiated any time by Dr. Vijapura or Physician Assistant/Nurse Practitioner for any questions or concerns. Dr. Vijapura is available during and after business hours for phone consultation to all Physician Assistants/Nurse Practitioners.
- Urine drug testing is to be utilized for routine monitoring and as indicated, for signs of illicit drug use, suspected non-medical use of and/or dependence on controlled substances. For patients exhibiting signs or symptoms of substance abuse or non-medical use of controlled substances, the Physician Assistant/Nurse Practitioner must inform Dr. Vijapura and collaboratively adjust the treatment plan accordingly.
- Patients prescribed stimulant medication who are deemed medically appropriate to continue maintenance follow-up visits via telemedicine will be advised to self-monitor their blood pressure, heart rate, and weight as well as maintain annual exams with their PCP.