

## “Red flags”: when not to worry

Some pharmacists report reluctance to dispense buprenorphine in specific scenarios, citing “red flags.” However, in many cases legislation and other guidance on controlled substance dispensing (e.g., the NC STOP Act) outlines verification procedures for each scenario rather than directing pharmacists not to dispense. Detailed guidance from the NC Stop Act for each of these scenarios is shown below.

	<b>Guidance for Opioids</b>	<b>Guidance for Buprenorphine Products</b>
<b>New patient</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Check CSRS</li> <li>✓ Contact Prescriber</li> <li>✓ Report to CSRS</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">May check CSRS May contact Prescriber ✓ Report to CSRS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scripts from new patients will increase as eligible prescribers increase (in part due to state training efforts)</li> </ul>
<b>Out-of-area patient</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Check CSRS</li> <li>✓ Contact Prescriber</li> <li>✓ Report to CSRS</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">May check CSRS May contact Prescriber ✓ Report to CSRS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scripts from new patients will increase as eligible prescribers increase.</li> <li>• Many patients must travel outside their local community to fill their prescription when local pharmacies encounter wholesaler thresholds</li> </ul>
<b>New/ out-of-area prescriber</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Check CSRS</li> <li>✓ Contact Prescriber</li> <li>✓ Report to CSRS</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">May check CSRS May contact Prescriber ✓ Report to CSRS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scripts from new patients will increase as eligible prescribers increase.</li> <li>• Many patients must travel outside their local community to fill their prescription when local pharmacies encounter wholesaler thresholds</li> <li>• Some patients may come from across a state border due to state-specific restrictions on a particular formulation (e.g. mono product restrictions in TN)</li> </ul>
<b>Extended duration/Day supply limit</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Per NC STOP Act, for acute pain limit opioid script to five-day supply, unless for post-operative acute pain (seven-day supply)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence-based guidelines recommend OUD treatment with buprenorphine for as long as beneficial. Some clinical guidelines state one year minimum and longer in pregnancy/postpartum.</li> </ul>
<b>Asking for medication by name</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Per NC STOP Act, suggests “potential misuse”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insurance may only cover one formulation</li> <li>• Patient assistance may only be available for a certain formulation</li> </ul>
<b>Requesting by imprint/description</b>	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Familiarity with the product</li> <li>• Preference for medication used in the past</li> </ul>
<b>Mono vs combo product</b>	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prescriber determines best option for patient’s circumstances (e.g. allergy/intolerance, insurance limitation, etc.)</li> <li>• Insurance may only cover a certain formulation</li> <li>• Patient assistance may only be available for a certain formulation</li> </ul>