

# Pharmacists have responsibility to check opioid Rx are legitimate

March 30 2018

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(HealthDay)—Pharmacists should be aware that they are expected to

take steps to make sure opioid prescriptions are written for legitimate medical purposes, and should document these efforts, according to a report published in *Drug Topics*.

Drawing from experience as an expert witness called to educate the jury, Jason Poquette, R.Ph., of Saint Vincent Hospital in Worcester, Mass., describes the role and responsibilities of the pharmacist in terms of dispensing controlled substances.

According to Poquette, efforts to be sure that [prescriptions](#) are appropriate should be documented. In order to protect their license, a [pharmacist](#) should consider asking for the diagnosis from the doctor's office, and documenting it for chronic opioid prescriptions, as well as asking the patient for their diagnosis and documenting it. In addition, the state prescription monitoring program should be checked for duplicate or early fills, and these should also be documented. Documentation should be recorded for follow-up with doctors or patients. Pharmacists should also be aware of red flags such as requests for early refills, [patients](#) travelling a distance to the pharmacy or doctor, and [cash payments](#).

"While protecting our licenses may not be the biggest problem, it is surely a real problem, and one that we pharmacists must consider," Poquette writes. "And better to learn these things by reading and reflecting, than by a personal and bitter experience of a cold and lonely courtroom."

**More information:** [Abstract/Full Text](#)

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Citation: Pharmacists have responsibility to check opioid Rx are legitimate (2018, March 30)

retrieved 26 June 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2018-03-pharmacists-responsibility-opioid-rx-legitimate.html>

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