Opioid CE & FAQ’s

The 2016 General Assembly passed law that requires the Board of Medicine to identify prescribers that should complete 2 hours of continuing education each biennium on topics related to pain management, the responsible prescribing of controlled substances, and the diagnosis and management of addiction. The Board decided that for the first biennium, it would require all licensees of the Board of Medicine with prescriptive authority to obtain the 2 hours of continuing education. The hours are to be Type 1. Below are answers to questions the Board received after the notice of this requirement was sent.

Updated FAQS for Controlled Substances
CE Requirements

Introduction
The Board of Medicine is required by law to identify prescribers who must complete 2 hours of continuing education (CE) in pain management, proper prescribing of controlled substances, and the diagnosis and management of addiction. The Board is requiring all prescribers licensed by the Board of Medicine to obtain 2 hours of Type 1 (CAT I) CE in the 24 months prior to your next biennial renewal. It is the responsibility of the licensee to find and complete the CE activities. The links provided in the notification were only suggestions which contained some Type 1 activities and some Type 2 activities that would be useful to all prescribers. Other Type 1 CE activities can be found at other sites on the Internet.

Questions and Answers

1. Who has to complete this CE requirement?
The requirement to obtain 2 hours of Type 1 CE is applicable to all licensees of the Board of Medicine with prescriptive authority regardless of whether a licensee is engaged in clinical medicine, administration, or any other category of practice. However, interns and residents holding a training license are not required to complete this CE.

2. When do I have to complete the 2 hours of CE?
MD’s, DO’s, DPM’s, PA’s and NP’s must complete 2 hours of Type 1 CE prior in the 24 months prior to your next renewal.

3. How will the Board know that I have taken the CE?
There will be a question in the renewal process to attest to having obtained the 2 hours of CE on controlled substances in the prior 24 months. For MD’s, DO’s, and DPM’s, the question will appear when you renew your license in 2018. PA’s renewing in the first 6 months of 2017 will not be expected to have completed the 2 hours of CE. However, those scheduled to renew in July through December of 2017 will see the question in the renewal process. Likewise, NP’s renewing in the first 6 months of 2017 will not be expected to complete the 2 hours of CE, but those renewing July 2017 or later are expected to do so.

4. Do I have to submit evidence of my CE to the Board?
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You are not required to submit evidence of your CE unless you receive an audit letter from the Board of Medicine.
5. What if I have done CE hours on pain management, proper prescribing of controlled substances, and the diagnosis and management of addiction previously?
The requirement is to obtain 2 hours of controlled substances CE in the next biennium, and the Board is interpreting that to be the 24 months prior to your next license renewal. The law went into effect July 1, 2016. So any CE on controlled substances taken on July 1, 2016 or thereafter will count towards the 2-hour requirement for the next biennium, as long as they fall within the 24-month timeframe.

6. Are these 2 hours of CE part of the required 30 Type 1 hours, or are they extra?
The 2 hours of controlled substances CE may be part of the 30 hours of Type 1 (CAT 1).

7. Will the Board accept CE that I take to satisfy my licensure in another state?
Virginia licensees who live and practice in another state can satisfy the 2-hour requirement for controlled substances by obtaining Type 1 (CAT 1) hours as long as it is done in the 24 months prior to your next license renewal.

8. Can I get an exemption?
There is no exemption from this CE requirement for doctors of medicine, osteopathy, podiatry, physician assistants, and nurse practitioners who hold active licenses. Retirement and lack of DEA registration do not exempt a licensee.

9. What if I have an inactive Virginia license?
Licensees with an inactive license are not required to obtain the 2 hours of controlled substances CE, because an inactive license does not confer prescriptive authority. However, if a licensee wishes to activate the license, he/she must attest to obtaining 2 hours of controlled substances CE in the 24 months prior to activation.

10. Can the Board send more links to other Type 1 (CAT I) CE courses/hours?
It is the responsibility of the licensee to find and complete the required hours of CE. The Board suggested that links to some CE resources be included in the notice describing this new requirement. The links include Type 1 and Type 2 activities which have useful information for all providers. However, the Type 2 activities do not meet the requirement of the law. Other opportunities to satisfy the requirement for Type 1 CE can be searched online.