



## Medication Management Guideline for MARR Affiliates

Adopted: 09/21/21

### Introduction

Recovery residences in Maine vary greatly when it comes to medication policies. Beginning in 2016, some recovery residences began to allow persons receiving medications for opioid use disorder (MOUD, also referred to as MAT), and some liberalized their policies toward other psychoactive medications. MARR has seen medication management policies of all types and has developed this *Guidance* document so our members can adopt and clearly communicate this important policy.

### Policy

MARR supports all pathways to recovery. This includes residences with policies that ban the use of all or most psychoactive prescription and non-prescription medications as well as those that permit properly prescribed medications that can produce a psychoactive effect. Psychoactive medications include drugs to treat depression, attention deficit hyperactivity disorders, narcolepsy, chronic pain conditions, and more. For residences that opt to allow use of cannabis for medical purposes, MARR has adopted a *Cannabis Policy Guidance* that permits use of cannabis subject to qualifications.

### Purpose

This document provides basic guidance and key considerations for residence operators that are supporting or want to support individuals who require psychoactive medications for their physical and mental health.

### Procedures

#### 1) Communication

- Clearly written policies and procedures are included in the *Resident Handbook*.
- Residents provide staff a list of medications and allow communication with the prescriber, including obtaining a signed *Release of Confidential Information* for the provider.

#### 2) Storage and security

- Medications are stored in a secure, limited access container. Double locked safes (with two types of access), provided by the residence operator and preferably located out of bedrooms (e.g., in a central location/office behind a locked door), are suggested as a “best practice.” .



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3) Safe, responsible self-administration

- The residence adopts an “observed self-administration” procedure. This means that no one except the person who has the prescription can handle the medication. Every dispensing event (adding new prescriptions, counting pills, etc.) is performed by the prescription owner. Unless medically licensed and supervised, it is illegal for staff to administer medications.
- All medications must have a dosage attached. For cannabis this includes labeled administration information.
- Combustible medications such as smoking or vaping cannabis are not permitted.
- Staff maintain documentation for each medication with, at a minimum, the name of the medication, date and time administered (including doses that are for use later in the day), person who witnessed the self-administration, and the remaining pill/strip count.
- On days with fewer staff support, residents may keep a minimum dose on their person.

4) Reduce possibility of diversion

- Residents must engage in personal recovery programs.
- There is a clear, written policy with consequences of violating terms. The policy could include, for example, regular written documentation and pill counts.
- Regular random drug testing and access to testing is done by prescribers.
- Residents and staff receive training about medications and their effects.
- Staff monitor residents and their behavior/interactions.
- Proper disposal procedures are in place that include immediate disposal when there is no longer a need for the medication. It is not permitted to dispose of unused medications by flushing down a toilet or placement with regular trash/garbage. Contact your local pharmacy, law enforcement agency or Maine 211 for drug “take-back” events.

5) Create a culture that supports all paths of recovery

- Staff and residents receive education about all pathways.
- Staff and residents are encouraged to share their concerns and success stories.
- Residents are connected with other recovery support services.
- Staff and residents use proper language and terminology around medication and recovery.



6) Factors of compliance

- Residents can show compliance with this policy by adhering to requirements, having a willingness to try additional/alternative healthy coping strategies, and demonstrating a positive behavior/good citizen/growth mindset.

## Violations

If an affiliate is found to have violated safe and legal medication policies (diversion, sales, theft, altering a provider's direction for dosage administration, etc.), they will be subject to a Compliance Review by the MARR Membership and Compliance Committee. Such a review will be performed according to published Grievance procedures, which contain the following:

From MARR Grievance Procedures, adopted July 7, 2021:

The Membership and Compliance Committee (MCC) is the group at MARR that handles complaints of all types involving our Affiliate members. Upon receiving a report of a violation, the MCC will determine if the report requires further action, including further investigation. Upon completion of any further inquiry, the MCC will report to the full BoD with a recommendation for further action, if indicated. If the BoD believes a critical incident (serious violation of NARR Ethical Standards, Social Media Policy) has occurred, it may take actions to safeguard the health and welfare of residents and assure adherence to NARR 3.0 Standards. Such actions may include:

- Referral to criminal justice authorities
- Report to Maine State Housing Authority
- Report to State Office of Behavioral Health (DHHS)
- Revocation of MARR certification, with or without remediation plan
- Suspension of MARR certification, with or without remediation plan
- Probationary Status, with remediation plan.
- Warning, with or without remediation plan.

## Appeals Process

MARR shall utilize an Appeals Process for any member who receives any of the above sanctions. Such an appeal must be received within 10 business days of receiving the *Notice of Action*. It should be addressed to the Chairman of the Membership and Compliance Committee (MCC). The appeal shall be addressed in a timely fashion by the MCC with a recommendation made to the full BoD. The BoD may adjust its *Notice of Action* if warranted and a final decision will be provided to the appellant in writing. In the event of an imminent threat to health/safety, the Facilitator may take immediate action as appropriate, including notifying authorities, MARR staff or board chair of the MCC.



References: ([https://narronline.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/NARR-C4-NCBH\\_MAR-RH-Brief.pdf](https://narronline.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/NARR-C4-NCBH_MAR-RH-Brief.pdf))

MARR Grievance Procedures, approved May 17, 2021