As Introduced

136th General Assembly
Regular Session
2025-2026

S. B. No. 434

Senator Reynolds

To enact section 3719.051 of the Revised Code to require that addiction-related educational materials be provided when dispensing opioid analgesics and benzodiazepines and to name this act the Verified Opioid and Intoxicant Consumer Education or VOICE Act.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF OHIO:

Section 1. That section 3719.051 of the Revised Code be enacted to read as follows:

Sec. 3719.051. (A) As used in this section, "pharmacy intern" means an individual licensed under Chapter 4729. of the Revised Code to practice as a pharmacy intern.

(B) The departments of health and behavioral health, in consultation with the chemical dependency professionals board and state board of pharmacy, shall develop for distribution to patients educational materials regarding the use of benzodiazepines or opioid analgesics. The materials shall address all of the following topics:

(1) Risks of addiction, misuse, and substance use disorder presented by the drugs;

(2) Signs of drug addiction, drug misuse, or substance use

disorder, and in particular, each condition's early warning signs;

(3) Safe use and proper disposal and storage of the drugs;

(4) Alternative methods for treating pain;

(5) Information about and resources available for intervention and addiction treatment.

(C)(1) When dispensing a benzodiazepine or opioid analgesic to a patient upon an initial prescription, a pharmacist, or pharmacy intern under the pharmacist's supervision, shall provide the patient or patient's representative with the educational materials described in division (B) of this section.

(2) A pharmacist or pharmacy intern also shall provide a patient or patient's representative with a survey to assist the patient or representative in assessing or confirming the patient's or representative's understanding of the topics described in divisions (B)(1) to (5) of this section. A patient or representative is not required to complete the survey as a condition of receiving the benzodiazepine or opioid analgesic.

(3) In providing the educational materials and survey to a patient or patient's representative, a pharmacist or pharmacy intern may do so by digital or electronic means, including by electronic mail or text message. In the case of a patient or representative who lacks digital or electronic access, paper copies of the materials and survey shall be provided.

(D)(1) Except as provided in division (D)(2) of this section, the requirements of division (C) of this section apply to any benzodiazepine and opioid analgesic dispensed upon an initial prescription, regardless of whether the drug was

prescribed for inpatient or outpatient use.

(2) The requirements of division (C) of this section do not apply to a benzodiazepine or opioid analgesic prescribed in any of the following circumstances:

(a) For the treatment of cancer or another condition associated with cancer;

(b) To a hospice patient in a hospice care program, as those terms are defined in section 3712.01 of the Revised Code, or any other patient diagnosed as terminally ill;

(c) To a patient receiving palliative care, as that term is defined in section 3712.01 of the Revised Code.

Section 2. This act shall be known as the Verified Opioid and Intoxicant Consumer Education or VOICE Act.